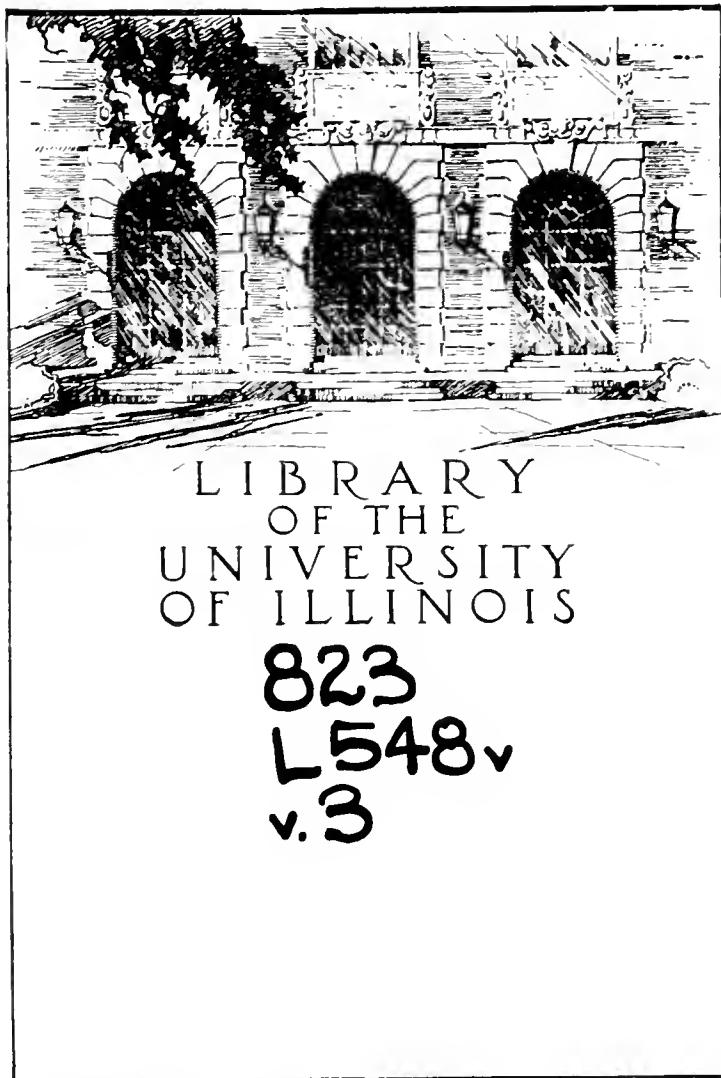


Zephaniah Maeguer
1835 xxx



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Thomas
VILLAGE ANECDOTES;

OR,

THE JOURNAL OF A YEAR,

FROM

SOPHIA TO EDWARD.

WITH

ORIGINAL POEMS.

By MRS. LE NOIR.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON,

PRINTED FOR VERNOR AND HOOD, 31, POULTRY,
By A. Wilson, Wild Court, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

1804.



VILLAGE ANECDOTES.

SOPHIA TO EDWARD.

To Mr. Willars.

Thursday, April 14, 179 .

THE grove has not been neglected during my absence. Harriet's bower, in particular, breathes fresh fragrance almost every hour. I never go there without being surprised with some fresh plant. The walk to it is nearly covered with smooth turf, and close behind there is a plantation of white and scarlet thorn, now about to blow ; the latter has been transplanted with great attention.

Who would have suspected Mr . Peter-
son's indolence and indifference of all this
care ? Peter, the gardener, must have had
a great deal of spurring, to have bestowed
so much time and pains here. He is a
good, plodding, laborious fellow ; but had
rather cultivate his cabbages than any thing
else ; and is of opinion, I believe, with
an original relation of ours, that the best
of all flowers is a cauliflower.

Friday 15.

Mr. Ewer has been a good steward of my
little deposit; he has added the like sum to
it, and given it to the Larimers, as a fur-
ther subscription from their friends. Mrs.
L. told me of this yesterday, with many
expressions of thanks to Providence, and
commendations of her benefactors ; but
most of the indefatigable Mr. Ewer, whose
servcies, she says, and kind attention, Hea-
ven

ven will surely repay, but, were she pos-
sessor of millions, she never could. I al-
ways knew him for a worthy creature;
continued she; I always did him justice as
far as that was possible. When I thought
myself in opulent circumstances, if he
could have fancied my Lucy, I should
have preferred him to a Duke. He used
to come often to our house, and I have
thought sometimes, but what signifies such
talking, my wishes deceived me, and Lu-
cy, poor child, set her heart upon another;
all went wrong, as it should seem to our
short sightedness: probably, we stood in
need of this treatment. God's will be done.

Saturday 16.

I thought Miss Peterson had bestowed
uncommon pains on her toilet yesterday;
not that it is usual with her at all to neglect
this important business, but sometimes when

there is no scheme of going out or seeing company, she will wear her morning undrefs all day : the pains were not, however, thrown away ; in the evening we had the visits of two beaux, Mr. Grove and Mr. Deacon ; for the first time I observed some little flutter about her, on the entrance of the former. "I have just seen your favourite, Miss Peterson," said he, " go to his eternal haunt, the Larimers. I'm sure he makes love either to the mother or the daughter. I am sorry, on your account, as he's such a charming fellow in your eyes, but I certainly expect to hear of a wedding there soon." "The sooner the better, Sir," returned sharply Miss Peterson, " they are a couple of dismals, and would make a wonderful good match." "I was not prepared for such an answer," said the gentleman ; "do you speak as you think, Miss Anne? young ladies don't always." "I don't speak what I do not think," answered she, "though I mayn't always tell all that I do."

do." " Well," said the gentleman, drawing closer to her, " that is very fair as times go." He did not quit his station the whole evening, paying her unusual attention, and she was in charming spirits. Mr. Deacon inquired if Miss Harriet was gone to live at Rosefield, complaining that this was the third time he had come on purpose to see her, and all he said for nothing? " When is Harriet to come home, wife?" said Mr. Peterson: " I desires she may be sent for to-morrow." " Why la, Mr. Peterson," returned the lady, " Mr. and Mrs. Bertram be to bring her home on Sunday; one day will make no great odds, I suppose." " Why, Deacon," said Mr. Grove, " what a poor dull wretch of a lover art thou; what! could not you ride over to see your mistress in all this time? If I was the girl I would never speak to you again." " Why, perhaps," said Mrs. Peterson, " she might not have spoken to him if he had gone, and then it would have been all

labour in vain, you know." "I'm sure if I'd thought she would have been but a little kind, I'd have gone with all my heart," said the inamorato, "or a mile or two further, for the matter o'that, and have thought nothing of it at all." I promised to tell his sweetheart, how much he was inclined to do for her sake, observing, that if that did not move her in his favour, her heart must be impenetrable. The swain seemed as if he distrusted my interference. He soon after took Mr. Peterson aside, and they had a long conversation, of which I suspect my little friend was the subject. This gives me serious alarm; I fear her return home will be made unpleasant to her by a formal declaration from this poor wretch of a lover. I know her uncle to be too kind hearted, however rough in exterior, to thwart her inclination by any violent means; but she will have the wishes of her family, in opposition to her own, which will distress her gentle nature perhaps even more.

more. Thus I foresee much painful anxiety in store for her, which I shall surely partake, but cannot by any means prevent.

I walked with Miss Larimer this morning; we stumbled upon Mr. Ewer by the river side, very unexpectedly, for he was seated so snug in the hollow trunk of an old willow, that he was quite invisible the way we approached. "Miss Larimer," said he, "you used to be fond of this sport; do take my rod, the fish bite well, and I'll contrive another for Mrs. Willars." We accepted, and he soon furnished us with tackle. We had great sport, and kept him sufficiently employed in baiting our hooks, and taking off the fish. We remained about two hours, which seemed so agreeable to Miss Larimer, that we should not then have desisted, but for fear of giving uneasiness to her mother, and delaying her dinner. It was agreed that we should eat our fish with her accordingly. Mr. Ewer was dispatch-

ed to account for my absence at home, and we set forwards to scrape the fish and prepare the dinner.

We waited for our messenger, whom we thought rather dilatory ; however, on his return, we were convinced he had made great speed, for he had been all the way home to fetch wine. Mrs. Larimer chid him for this ; "you know that I have some," said she, "you, that sent it to me, and you refuse me the pleasure of seeing you and Mrs. Willars partake of it." He excused himself on the score of his having been all the morning by the water side ; and that he required, he said, a bottle to his own share. We all took a few glasses to ourselves and absent friends, and were very cheerful.

You were toasted, my Edward. All express the kindest and most earnest desires of seeing you here. Sure we shall meet again.—With what pleasure shall I introduce

duce you to all my amiable suffering friends ; tried on the touch-stone of adversity, bred in her school.

Heaven preserve my Edward !

Sunday, April 17.

A joyful day to me, for Mr. and Mrs. Bertram have kept their word and brought home Harriet ! I forbore to tell her my unpleasant surmises on her account, but left her to enjoy, unallayed, the pleasure of her return ; which sparkled in her eyes, and gave elasticity to all her motions. I am always so glad to return home," said she, embracing me, then springing away, ran all over the house to enjoy the sight of every thing and every person in it. Sappho followed her about with equal delight, and seemed apprehensive of again losing sight of her. There

was company in the afternoon, which perhaps was the reason that she escaped for the day any hint of Mr. Deacon's proposals from the family. Mrs. Bennet had sent word in the morning that she should bring a young lady, her relation and ~~adviser~~, to tea. Mrs. Bertram, who loves new faces, was induced to stay late to see her, and several of our pastoral beaux, who have the same propensity, were likewise attracted. There were the two Groves, their sister, Mr. Deacon, and two of the Mr. Figginses. The fair stranger, the magnet of attraction, is called Miss Cane—she is daughter to a half brother of Mrs. Bennet, who is in business in some eminent way in London: she is rather pretty, very shewy, very lively, dresses with taste, and has the style of a girl of fashion. You will not be surprised, that before a planet of such brightness, our little female constellations hide their diminished heads, or that all the men are dazzled. Mr. Grove senior seemed alone

alone to consider her with the cold eye of a critic, for he is not yet well informed as to her fortune; in his estimation, the sole criterion of merit ;—he is none of those who suffer their hearts to be taken by surprise, or by any other bait than gold. He says there is but one excuse for marrying—that of a great fortune to be acquired by it. His brother less wary, or more susceptible of the charms of novelty, was extremely captivated by the fair stranger ;—he had neither eyes, nor ears, nor tongue, for any one else ;—was she silent ? He was lost in admiration. Did she speak ? In attention, his compliments and assiduities were without bounds ; and Miss Cane, who had doubtless been apprised that he was a conquest worth securing, was nothing less than insensible to them. The Figgins's seemed a little disposed to dispute the prize with him, but he maintained his ground against all opposition.

When he had quitted his post to set down her tea-cup, one of them took possession of it by surprise; he then very gallantly seated himself at her feet. Miss Peterson, who presided at the tea-table, coloured like crimson at this sight: the crockery chattered as she set it upon the waiter; and, forgetting to stop the water, it continued running over the tea-pot and the board, till she would have had it in her lap, if Miss Grove had not been a little occupied in observing her. "La, Child!" she exclaimed, "if instead of watching my brother, you would mind what you are about, you would not run the risk of scalding yourself." This observation delivered, so as to be heard by all the company, did not tend to lessen her confusion; however, the little bustle of wiping the board, &c. in part concealed it. It likewise gave Miss Cane to understand, that she had a rival; a discovery which increased her vivacity so much, that

it rather put in question her good-nature; and might have disgusted a man of delicacy and discernment: if, indeed, there are any so nice as to be shocked at faults that flatter their own consequence, self-love, and ideal superiority -- if there is one such, Edward, thou art the man: — and one day you will answer me this truly. But the generality of mankind, I believe, my love, are flattered to see us weak and silly: and many women affect to be more so than they really are instinctively: thence the pretty fears, and fine feelings, so often assumed; the silliest of us know where you wise ones are vulnerable, and make arms of their very weakness.

Mr. Deacon was officially placed near Harriet, to whom, however, he spoke but once; and that was to observe, what a very fine girl was Miss Cane.

After

After tea, it was proposed to walk to see the gardens, and Mrs. Willar's Grove. I led Harriet along the first, in order to enjoy her surprise. — There was, however, no shaking off Deacon: he followed like St. Anthony's pig, and was about a good company. We went first to Sailor's monument, now completely finished. She blushed extremely at the sight of the epitaph: indeed, said she, it is all pretty but that. Why, my dear friend, will you make me ashamed of myself? I found means to reconcile her to the awkwardness of her first appearance in print, always distressing to a timid and ingenuous mind, which never can think it has succeeded. We next repaired to your grove, my Edward, over which, the only oak in the place spreads his protecting arms.—

“ In pastoral magnificence he stands,

“ So simple, and so great!”

I thought

I thought this support of the British navy a proper emblem of one of its members; and therefore selected this spot for me and thee.

We left the rest of the company to their own pace and comments, and tript away to Harriet's bower. I suffered her to admire it without interruption; and not having seen it myself, for several days, could not but marvel at the improvement those few days have produced. It is really a sweet spot, and almost worthy of the object to whom it is inscribed.

Do you know, my dear, at length said I, that this is your bower, and that you have a sylph who takes pleasure in adorning it: I never come here without finding it improved—certainly with too much taste for Peter.

Harriet's

Harriet's eye had caught some lines, inscribed on a tablet, half concealed with lilack in bloom:—they were as follows:

“ Whate'er of fair, whate'er of sweet,
“ Shall here thy ravish'd senses greet;
“ Are emblems faint, however rare,
“ Of Harriet sweet, of Harriet fair.”

Oh, you flatterer! said she, I see who is the sylph; it is a charming one, and I cannot but be sensible of its praise. In vain I protested that I knew nothing of the stanza.—She still seemed to doubt me.—The remainder of our party had now joined us — some saying it was pretty enough; others, and among them, Mr. Grove sen. that it was a cursed, foolish piece of business; wondering what it was good for, but to please women and children, while a penny rattle might have answered all the purpose; and this folly has, I warrant, said he, cost Peterson some pounds: meanwhile

while his more gentle brother gathered some violets, with which he presented Miss Cane.

Harriet kept her position before the inscription, hoping to conceal it; but Miss Grove complaining of fatigue, made her move, that she might sit down. Her Argus eye soon caught the verses.—Very well, Miss Harriet, said she, very fine, indeed. What, do you write verses upon yourself, or does your friend, Mrs. Willars, write them for you? Here, Deacon, come and sign them.

All the company crowded to see the verses; and poor Harriet was extremely confused. Mr. Deacon was not to be prevailed upon to sign what, for aught he knew, might be a promissary note; and Miss Grove undertook to be his proxy.—Miss Cane, picking her violets to pieces, thought it was very pretty to be so celebrated.

brated. As she threw them away, Miss Peterson picked them up; which circumstance, I have reason to think, did not escape the person on whose account they were thought so precious: it did not, however, move him to the least attention to her; and I was sorry his vanity was so pampered.

The company soon after separated. I have been writing almost ever since.

Sweet—good night!

Monday, April 18.

My companion and I were preparing for a morning's walk, of which the chief end was to visit the Larimers; when Harriet was summoned by her uncle to attend him in

in the garden. "What can my uncle want?" said she, alarmed; "however, I hope he will not detain me long; do you walk on, and I will follow you as speedily as possible." I sauntered along as slowly as I could, stopping at every stile, and looking back in vain for her: such was my anxiety, I should have returned, but I met Miss Larimer coming to see us; she told me her mother was indisposed. I therefore could not dispense with myself from going on. I found the poor old lady a little feverish; in spirits still worse than her health. She complained that Mr. Ewer had not been near them for some days; "and you cannot think," said she, "how much I miss him. I fear too, that he has had news from Ireland, and will not come to tell it us. I sent Lucy to enquire after your healths, and to know if you had seen him." I told her that Mr. Ewer's visits at Mr. Peterson's were much less frequent than formerly; and that I had not seen him since we dined with

with him together. We had been thus chattering about half an hour, when Harriet arrived, pale and breathless. She threw herself into a chair, scarce answering Miss Larimer's kind inquiries after her health. I made a sign to the ladies not to notice her distress; and left her to recover it without enquiring the cause. In the interim, a tap at the door announced another visitor, and in walked Mr. Ewer. He addressed us with the usual compliments, which all answered but Harriet, who seemed in vain to attempt it. "Is not Miss Harriet well?" said Mr. Ewer to me; I answered that she was a little fluttered, having walked fast to overtake me, and all the way alone.

During the remainder of our visit, which I prolonged only till I thought her sufficiently recovered to walk home, she did not utter a single word, nor appear to notice any thing that past. I had twice repeated, "Come, my love, let us walk;" before

fore she had sufficiently recovered from her stupor to obey the summons. She then started up, coloured very high, and ~~burst~~ :
ing in silence, followed my lead.

Mr. Ewer handed me down the stairs, and then bowing very low to Harriet, returned to the Larimers. I led round by the river, to prolong our walk: we were, however, half way home, before she could prevail upon herself to disclose her distress, and then I was obliged to begin. "I fear, I have guest right as to your uncle's business," said I, "Was it not to propose Deacon, seriously, to your acceptance?" "O dear, yes!" returned she, "and he did not even permit me to refuse him; he would not hear what I had to say." She burst into tears. "I'm sure," said I, your uncle is too reasonable, and too good, to force your inclinations, if they are decidedly against the match he proposes." "If!" said she, "there is no if in the case, Mrs.

Willars.

Willars. Can you think of persuading me to pass my life with such a man as that? My uncle spoke very kindly to me," continued she, "and it is that which distresses me most: he said, he only desired me to take time before I gave a positive denial; as he thought from my good sense, (he was pleased to say,) I should consider of the advantages of the match, and think better of the suitor:—the young fellow, Harriet," said he, "is careful and good natured; he looks to the main chance: and, besides a pretty bargain of his own, he has a good farm, which he holds cheap, and has a long lease of; he has a little snug house, just in the neighbourhood, and you would be all at home like, among your friends. Do, my good girl, try to like him, and when you are married, you will be as happy as can be.—I could only answer with tears," continued Harriet, "and he left me to shed them at leisure." "Now, only consider, my dear friend, what a distressful case is mine!"

mine ! Here am I to receive this man as a professed suitor, approved by my family, and as if I meant to marry him. I may, perhaps, find myself entangled past retrieve, or reduced to the dreadful alternative,—if I cannot sacrifice my inclination to my friends, of sacrificing my friends to my inclination, I had like to have said *happiness*, but that is not the word ; I must be miserable in either case. Will they not take advantage of the weakness I show, to say that I have encouraged him ; and to accuse me of lightness, when I declare my positive rejection of him ; for indeed I cannot think of being his wife ? Do advise me ; what can I do ? ”

I could not but acknowledge that her alarm was just, and advised her to take the earliest opportunity of declaring her sentiments, both to her suitor and her family, that they might not have to complain of being

being misled, nor she be the dupe of her own easiness and their contrivance. It was dinner time when we reached home; the meal past in silence on the part of the young ladies, for Miss P. was ~~scarc~~ⁱⁿ better spirits than her cousin; but the ladies of the family were in high good humour; they talked much, and eat well, and were particularly attentive to Harriet, who forced herself to eat, to avoid speaking much against her appetite. When the cloth was removed, her aunt told her the wind had *discommode*d her hair, and desired her to go and smart herself a bit. She seized the opportunity to retire. Half an hour afterwards, I found her leaning her head upon her hand, but her toilet in no forwardness.

I cautioned her not to give way to depression when exertion was so necessary: "dress yourself, my love," said I, "as your aunt desired you, and when Mr. Dea-

con comes this evening, as I do not doubt he is expected, take him aside, and tell him your determination at once." "I shall never have the courage," said she; however, I prevailed on her to make some little alteration in her dress, which at least amused her, while it was doing. The youth came sure enough, and his mistress even mustered spirit enough to request to speak with him apart; but as her bashfulness gave way, his increased:—he would follow her no farther than to the door, then hastily drew back; either aware of her design, or fearing the awkwardness of a first tete-à-tete, as to induce him to come to an explanation. She has been much less shy of him than usual, the family seemed to think his suit in a fair way.

Mrs. Peterson whispered to me to recollect how her Charlotte used to be with Mr. Bertram:—"I was afraid," said she, "she never would have had him, and now

they're as happy as the day's long." Curiosity as to the cause of Harriet's distress, or some other motive, brought us another visitor—Mr. Ewer, who of late has been rather slack of his visits. His welcome from the heads of the family, was unusually warm, accompanied with reproaches for his late desertion of it. This did not, however, induce him to prolong his visit: whatever were his observations, he appeared uneasy the little time he stayed; during which, Harriet was more civil than usual to Mr. Deacon: that is to say, she once or twice address her conversation to him, and had somewhat less of dejection in her manner and countenance.

Tuesday, April 19.

Miss Larimer was with me betimes this morning. I received her visit in my room, for I had not yet left it. I beg your pardon

pardon, Madam, said she, for this intrusion; but both my mother and I are extremely anxious to know the cause of Miss Harriet's distress: we are afraid it was something extraordinary. I related the matter nearly as she had told it to me.—Miss Larimer said her mother would be happy to hear it was no worse: that for her own part she hoped there was no danger of Miss Harriet's being persuaded into such a match.—Did I think so? Her mother was very anxious about it; and hoped I would use my influence in her support, in case she wanted resolution?—I answered, that I was willing to believe there would be no occasion for interference of any kind; and that I should be extremely unwilling to undertake such an office. After a little more conversation, she left me; for I could not prevail upon her to stay breakfast.

Wednesday, 20.

We went yesterday to Miss Grove's to spend the afternoon, in consequence of an invitation to meet Mrs. Bennet and her visitor. Miss Peterson made herself as smart as she could; but anxiety clouded her fair countenance, and counteracted the effect of her labours. The rest of the company were assembled when we arrived. I saw the rival fair ones examine each other, and then severally steal a look at the glass. The gentleman who was the cause of all this anxiety to please, did not seem, however, inclined to hesitate, or make any comparison. His choice seems decided; and all the village give him to Miss Cane.

I am sorry to observe, that Miss P. appears seriously attached; she is only too good for him; and I should be much concerned

cerned to see her unhappy. I wonder I had not observed it sooner. Miss Grove, I fancy, has been quicker sighted. She was continually teasing her with inquiries after her health; wondering what made her look so dull. We shall all think you in love, said she, if you don't brighten up a little.

After tea it was proposed to walk, and take a view of some improvements which Mr. Grove is making on part of his farm. He asked Miss Cane's advice and opinion upon them as seriously as if it concerned her; while she affectedly referred to Miss Peterson, who, when she could not avoid answering, only said, she was no judge. We returned back a different way, to prolong and diversify the walk; crossing a field, which leads towards Mrs. Larimer's, we saw, at a distance, her daughter with Mr. Ewer, earnestly engaged in discourse. They were going towards the

lady's home, but seemed in no hurry, frequently stopping as if to converse more freely.

Though there might be nothing very remarkable in all this, yet the company were disposed to think it so:—"It is as I told you," said Miss Grove, looking significantly at Mrs. Bennett; "yes, the obstacle's removed, and I expect every day to hear of a wedding there." Mrs. Halls tells me he is there for ever: well 'tis a good thing if he has so much honesty as to think of marrying her.

Miss Cane inquired who *those people* were? and was answered that nobody knew — that they came nobody knew whence—and would probably return there —nobody cared how soon. The lady said she believed they were strolling players, and that she thought she had seen them last year at Margate, the gentleman as Lothario,
the

the lady as the Fair Penitent : this sally very much amused the company.

Harriet had taken my arm, and did not seem hurt, as she usually does, at these kind of observations : her concern was lost in a nearer interest ; nor was I long in discovering what it was. She has opened her heart to love, and the traitor has let in jealousy : 'tis thus with all our passions. Oh, my Edward, what poor mortals we are !

I have run a thorn into my finger, and write with difficulty.

Friday, May 6.

The gathering on my finger, which I thought a thorn, has made a cripple of me till

till now: I have not been able either to write or work since; and have had my rest broken for several nights.

How tedious has been this interval, oh, my Edward! Deprived of my chief consolation, my only solace in thy absence—that of conversing with thee—of imparting to thee all my thoughts and actions; while I imagine thy answers, and fancy a kind approving glance following the traces of my pen, and gilding them like a sun-beam. However, my love, if I have not been able to write, I have paid it off with thinking. I have walked a great deal, and often visited the grove dedicated to thee! There, of late, I have been sure to meet the nightingale, who makes it her favourite resort, free from all other interruption. I muse, and think on thee. My poor Harriet is not at present the best of company; she is absent; even when I talk of you! She affects solitude; and is so

so pestered with her unamiable pretender, that it makes her at times a little peevish. One day last week she had proposed to call upon the Larimers, with a present of a chicken of her own rearing, (for she has poultry to amuse her.) It was a fine genial morning, all nature seemed rejoicing; it was not possible to resist her and be sad.

We set off with light hearts and steps, laughing, chatting, and singing on the way. Soon arriving, Harriet ran lightly up stairs the first. She opened the door without knocking, in her *gaité de cœur* forgetting that ceremony; but immediately started back as if she had seen a serpent. I was now close behind her; and as she instantly recovered herself, we went in together. It then appeared that we had interrupted an interesting *tête-à-tête*, between Miss Lariimer and Mr. Ewer: they were sitting together in the window; and when Harriet first saw them, Mr. Ewer

was holding Miss L.'s hand, and engaged so earnestly, that he did not observe the opening of the door. Both rose at our entrance; Miss Larimer blushing excessively, and in the utmost confusion; nor was Mr. Ewer perfectly unembarrassed.

" You are engaged, you are busy, I beg pardon," stammered out Harriet, as she made a motion to withdraw. " I am not engaged, indeed, nor busy at all," said Miss Larimer, endeavouring to look unconcerned; " pray, ladies, walk in, my mother is but just gone to her own room, and will be here immediately: do sit down while I tell her that you are here." Mr. Ewer, while she was gone, placed our chairs, took the basket from Harriet, and taking her hands, almost constrained her to be seated, saying, " Nay, Miss Harriet, you look fatigued; will you not indulge me with the pleasure of seeing you repose yourself." He said these few words in a tone

stone of tenderness which she could not resist, notwithstanding her surprise at the late scene. In the mean time Mrs. Larimer entered with her daughter. She received us, as she always does, with a warmth in her welcome, and energy in her kindness, unknown to us cold English women ; and soon made us forget all unpleasant circumstances. She had some nice little cakes of her own making, which we were not suffered to refuse, any more than some wine after our walk.

Mr. Ewer was as pressing to offer refreshment as Mrs. Larimer, and so extremely attentive to Harriet, that his behaviour was utterly inexplicable ; and I felt ready to accuse him of duplicity. I found myself obliged to break up the party, for my companion was in no haste. We were, however, suffered to go unattended ; probably, as Harriet observed, Mr. Ewer had something more to say to Miss Larimer.

mer. "Dear Madam," she said, as soon as we were out of hearing, "is not all this very strange? I begin to think the reports of the village have some foundation; if they were only talking of business, why should they seem confused? and why was not Mrs. Larimer of the party?—and then his behaviour to me, as if he meant to blind me? Oh this man! my dear friend, I believe he is no better than the rest."

I knew not what to answer; my dear Edward! and remained silent. Would it be doing her a service to clear him in her opinion, while his intentions remain doubtful, and his means of existence a mystery? or, indeed, could I vindicate him, when the matter was to me as inexplicable as to her? In short, this incident has added to her uneasiness, and so unsettled her mind, as to prevent her executing the plan she proposed of giving Deacon his final dismission by writing, as she cannot

cannot prevail to do it verbally. The term of Miss Cane's visit here is expired; but she has obtained another month; every body says, to secure her conquest. The plan, however, if such it was, seems to have totally failed. Mr. S. Grove, who had expressed the deepest concern at the thought of her departure, having obtained of her to delay it, now flights her altogether; insomuch, that at a little dance, accidentally introduced, one evening that we spent at Mrs. Bennett's, by the arrival of a blind fidler, he actually danced with every young lady there but her, though she was unquestionably the best dancer present.

Miss Peterson has recovered her spirits, in a great measure, since this event. Her mother says it would be hard indeed, if strangers are to come and carry off the young men, when there are so many clever girls in the village.

I have

I have been to Mrs. Larimer's alone, in hopes of some explanation of Mr. Ewer's conduct; but failed totally in my expectation.

Miss Larimer avoids speaking of him, and seems distressed if I lead to the subject. What can I think of all this?

Saturday, May 7.

As Harriet continued anxious and deprest, I had recourse to what I have ever found the best remedy; that of finding exercise for her benevolence, and thus diverting her mind from dwelling on its own distresses, by seeking to relieve those of others. Our excursions, in the village, have furnished us with objects; and my plan has succeeded to my most sanguine expectations.

expectations. She has made a complete suit of baby linen for one of the poor neighbours, who, though tolerably industrious, does not know the use of a needle. Jaunts to M— to purchase materials, and backwards and forwards to the poor woman's, who lives about a mile off, have been at least as beneficial to us as to the object they were meant to relieve. And thus it is always, I believe, my Edward, active virtue is sure of its reward; even here, we injure ourselves when we neglect it.

Sunday, 8.

We women, my dear Edward, are much accused of the little meanness of jealousy; of not enduring to hear the praises of another, particularly on the score of personal charms. I am not going to deny a charge

charge so generally received, but to retort, my Edward. I have continual opportunities of observing here, that men cannot bear to hear each other extolled on any subject whatever. The unpolished society, of which I am often an unworthy member, probably have this unamiable propensity more glaring than it would be in higher circles, where every thing is varnished.— But here the passions speak their own plain language, and appear in all their native deformity. It is not allowed to praise any man in the hearing of another. A woman runs the risk of being accused of unwarrantable partiality ; or, as the phrase is, of being in love with the subject of her eulogy.

“ Pray, Sir,” said I to the elder Grove in answer to a charge of this kind ; “ have I exaggerated, or said any thing that is not strictly true ? When you detect me in so doing, accuse me of partiality if you please ;

please; but when I say, what every one must be constrained to think, I hope the praise is warrantable; and that one may be allowed to do justice to merit." If a man is only mentioned as being a good farmer, all open to deny his management. A good shot has still more rivals and obstacles to his fame; no one will believe that he is so successful as he boasts. Even the reputation of hard drinking cannot be peaceably enjoyed; some one will pretend to be able to bear more liquor, or that he has seen the hero of the bottle overcome with a very paltry dose.

Mr. J. Peterson is, I believe, the best cricket player in these parts; but I only gather it from his own family, and the criticisms of others, as well as his unquestionably winning every thing he contends for. Mr. Ewer is certainly an expert angler; he practises much, and with great success: but none of our rural sportsmen

men will allow it: even Mr. Peterson, when eating of what he has presented, often says it was taken with a *silver* hook. His other excellencies are no more granted than this: but he is a stranger and an interloper; and too eminently superior not to excite uneasiness. I could forgive them on his account; but they are not a jot more indulgent to each other.

In a more enlarged sphere of life, I have too often had occasion to remark, that distinguished excellence raises much more enemies than friends.

These are sad truths, my Edward! — alas! poor human nature!

Monday,

Monday, May 9.

Poor Mrs. Larimer, supported by her daughter, and still more effectually by her own grateful affectionate heart, paid us a visit yesterday. The ladies were hardly seated when another visitor arrived; this was the elder Grove.—He told Mrs. Peterson that he was deputed as a messenger to announce his brother and sister who were coming to take a sociable dish of tea with her: then turning abruptly to Miss Larimer, whom he had not before noticed, he inquired what she had done with her beau? “For at a good distance,” said he, “I thought I saw Ewer escorting you.—Why did you turn him off? *you*, at least, have no reason to be ashamed of him.” Miss Larimer’s pale cheek flushed a little at this speech; and Harriet’s so much, that she found something or nothing to look at in the window, in order to conceal

conceal it. Mrs. Larimer answered for her daughter.—She said, Mr. Ewer had, indeed, attended them part of the way: he regretted, added she, that he had letters to take to M— this evening, which business deprived him of the pleasure of paying his respects to Mrs. Peterson and the family, in person. We were charged to express his compliments and concern.

Harriet now ventured to look round; she drew near to Miss Larimer, and invited her, though with somewhat of constraint in her manner, to take a turn in the garden. Miss Peterson had disappeared as soon as she knew Mr. Grove's errand. I suspected that it was to make some addition to her toilet, and was not mistaken.

In the absence of the young ladies, the rest of the party arrived, who began to make them the subject of their conversation,

tion, with as little reserve as if they had had neither friend nor relation present.

To Mrs. Peterson's question of—what news? Miss Grove answered, “that she knew of none but the two weddings that were about to take place. You are in luck, Madam Peterson,” said she, “two weddings in your family, within the year, and poor we cannot have one.—I protest I've a great mind to come and lodge with you.”

Mrs. Larimer innocently inquired if Miss Peterson was going to be married; said she was a most deserving young person; and that she hardly knew any one worthy of her. “Miss Grove,” glancing a fly look at her brother, said, “that, to be sure, she was a nonsuch; and, on that account, might wait a great while for her match.” “No, Madam,” said she, “I mean

mean Miss Harriet ; and as you are such great friends, I suppose you can hardly be ignorant that she is soon to be married to Mr. Deacon.—Why, the little fellow is a foot higher upon the occasion ; he tells it to every body ; and is fitting up his house for her reception.—Nay, I am assured that he actually gave the workmen sixpence to drink, the other day, to induce them to use dispatch.”

Mrs. Larimer looked anxiously at me, as if she wished me to contradict the report : it was not my business ; and I remained silent. She was, however, immediately attacked nearer home. Mrs. Peterson had not forgot that Miss Grove had spoke of two weddings. She desired to know what was the other? “ Oh, that,” returned the lady, “ I leave Mrs. Larimer to inform you, as it is in her family.”—“ In my family !” said Mrs. L. with a look of the most unaffected astonishment.

Is Miss a going to be married then, Madam? inquired Mrs. Peterson.

" My poor child, Madam," returned she, " has no fortune but sorrow, nor any wish to abandon her helpless parent; even could there be a man, were it possible there should be one, who could see her merit through her distress." " Well," said Miss Grove, " every body says the man is found, and there never was so proper a match.—You must stay till the first mourning is over, to be sure; yet I can't see why it should be made a secret?"— " Alas, Madam," said Mrs. Larimer, " it is a secret to none so much as to the parties themselves. I once ardently wished for such an union, in the days of my prosperity; at present, you may believe, that I desire it as little as I expect it." " I believe, indeed," said Miss Grove, " that your wishes and expectations are upon a par: so far I believe."

At this part of the conversation the young ladies entered, and the tea-things: the subject of course was dropt. Mr. John Grove took it into his head to be extremely attentive to Harriet all the evening: he paid her a hundred unmeaning compliments, followed her like her shadow, and completely succeeded in making her cousin jealous, and her uncomfortable.

Mr. Ewer came between eight and nine o'clock, just in time to see the Larimers home: this attention was painful to more than one; in short, it was the Comedy of Errors: and to-day, notwithstanding the gaiety of the season, we are all vapoured as if it were November.

Miss Larimer taps at my door.—Adieu!

Tuesday, May 10.

Miss Larimer brought a note from her mother, which contained what follows:

To Mrs. Willars.

It is agony to me, my dear and valuable friend, to be obliged to have reserves with you. I hope, nevertheless, that a very short time will clear up every thing; and that, in the meanwhile, you will do our hearts' justice. With respect to the idle report mentioned yesterday, I think it unnecessary to say one word. That relative to Miss Harriet has really given me uneasiness; particularly as Mrs. Peterson seemed to allow it.

I am sure you will forgive, in behalf of my friendship and concern for that young lady, the earnest desire I feel to be informed of the truth.

Alas! my dear Madam, can her friends think seriously of such a cruel sacrifice?

In answer to this, I explained to Miss Larimer all it was proper she should know of Harriet's circumstances. I, too, had my reserves, as the ladies acknowledge they have theirs.

I should not indeed have betrayed what I knew of my little friend's secrets, had it been otherwise, however I may think highly of those ladies discretion. I feel a little piqued at this acknowledgement of theirs; yet why should I?—They may have secrets, which they have no right to divulge, as well as I.

Wednesday, May 11.

Mrs. Peterson came into the parlour this morning where we were at work, and asked if we were disposed for a walk, and would oblige her so much as to go to Mrs. Clarke's for a receipt to cure prickt wine, which she had promised her, and of which she was much in want. I readily consented, as did Miss Peterson: Harriet seemed a little reluctant, but a hint from her aunt that she always was backward to comply with her wishes (however unmerited), made her hasten for her hat and cloak. We walked leisurely, and were induced, by the beauty of the weather and the melody of the birds, to choose our way through some green lanes and a coppice, which brought us the back way to the house, through the garden. We discovered Mr. Ewer at some distance engaged in conversation with a female, whom we presently recognised to be Miss

Larimer. We saw her give him a letter, and appear, by her gestures, to refuse his offer of conducting her home. This ceremony lasted a few seconds, and they parted at the garden gate, just as we were about to take the path that led to it.

Miss Larimer is short sighted, and might possibly not see us; it is certain, however, that she took the contrary way, as if she meant to avoid us, and escape our observation. Miss Peterson was the only one at all disposed to animadvert upon this circumstance, and she had not time to say much, as Mr. Ewer had descried, and was coming to meet us. "How happy am I," said he, "I was just going out, and my good genius prevented me. I should never have forgiven myself, had I lost such a charming encounter." "Nay, don't be vain upon it," said I, "it is not you we are coming to see; our business is with Mrs. Clarke, if she is at home; we should have easily

easily consoled ourselves though you had not." "I believe you readily," said he, "but that does not make my good fortune nor my pleasure the less; nor will it prevent you, I hope, from honouring my little parlour, by reposing yourselves in it." I, as *chaperon*, accepted the invitation, and Mrs. Clarke brought us the receipt, and offered us refreshments there. I took a glass of her home-made wine, in order to induce Harriet to do the same, whose pale cheeks seemed to require something a little exhilarating.

Miss Peterson, who was upon thorns for an explanation of the vision we had seen, at length found, or rather made an opportunity to inquire. As Mr. Ewer was offering some civility, "you make as much fuss," said she, "as if you never had ladies to see you; yet we certainly caught the glimpse of one as we entered." Mrs. Clarke now took up the cudgels, and pro-

tested no lady had been there. Mr. Ewer only smiled in answer; he was called out at that moment to some person who wanted him. Thus we were convinced Miss Larimer had not been seen by the family, which only made the circumstance the more mysterious. Harriet made a motion to withdraw, during Mr. Ewer's absence, and as she seemed earnestly to desire it, I readily complied.

Thursday, May 12.

A fit of melancholy seized me this morning, Edward: I was ruminating on your long silence, the dangers to which you are continually exposed, and the length of time which may yet intervene before we meet, if we ever meet again. I was indulging these gloomy reflections, with my eyes fixt on objects I hardly saw, and a sort of re-

pugnance

pugnance to seek relief in company or employment, when Harriet arrived with her work basket. "Do I interrupt you, my dear Mrs. Willars," said she, "or will you give me leave to keep you company?" I took her hand and seated her in silence, for my heart was full, and my eyes ready to run over. She neither enquired the cause of my gloom, nor offered commonplace consolation; the first she guessed at, the latter she has already judgment enough to feel the absurdity of, and to avoid as always useless, and generally teasing. She sat herself at work, and after a short pause began singing, the old song of, "To you fair ladies now at land;" afterwards, "black-eyed Susan," and then all the sea songs she could think of, that were not dismal. She succeeded completely in diverting my melancholy; and perhaps her own: we soon fell into a pleasant chat, and she ventured to speak of the late unaccountable encounter of Mr. Ewer and Miss

Larimer, which we had been witness of. "I cannot help thinking it strange," said she, "that they should seem to affect so much secrecy in their connection; if they are honourably attached, and I cannot suppose anything else, what is it to us, or to the village? Who has any right to object?"

"No one, my dear," returned I, "and therefore I do not believe there is any attachment at all, of the nature you hint at. I'm sure Mrs. Larimer would apprise me of it if there were." "Are you," said she, brightening up a little; then instantly recollecting herself, "but you know, Madam, Mrs. Larimer, in her note to you, acknowledges she has reserves, nor does she directly contradict the report she speaks of." "Sure," said I, "she does;" however, upon referring to the note, of which she retained every word, I was constrained to admit, that there was some ambiguity in the expressions. Harriet's countenance fell so much on this that I was obliged to undertake

undertake the part of comforter in my turn; I succeeded not, however, as she had just done with me; yet sure, my Edward, my grief was better founded than hers. Sure there is no comparison, between the real misfortune of being so cruelly separated from a tender and beloved husband, so worthy of all my regret, and the imaginary one, of apprehending to lose an object never possessed, - and who, after all, may not be deserving of our tears. It is nevertheless certain, that poor Harriet, a prey to restless anxiety, is far more unhappy than I am. I endeavour to soothe and divert her as much as possible, without, however, appearing to suspect the situation of her heart.

Friday, May 13.

Yesterday evening, which Mr. Ewer spent here, the conversation turned chiefly on the subject of the Lord of the Manor : his physicians,

sicians, as a last resource, have ordered him to Bath, where he is gone with little prospect of his ever returning alive. The probability of his demise causes much agitation here, for though little known, and not at all beloved, he will be universally regretted. His extreme inattention to his affairs, left his tenants the most unbounded liberty; their rents have not been raised, nor their sports interrupted, since he took possession of the estate, about thirty years ago. As he is said to be selfish, and a lover of money, this neglect of a fine territorial possession, which he might have improved to a considerable amount, was observed upon as a strange inconsistency of character.

"We all wonder at each other's inconsistencies," said Mr. Ewer, "and overlook our own, as if it was given to human nature to be consistent:—the greatest of our inconsistencies is, perhaps, the surprise it so continually

nually occasions, whereas a character uniformly consistent would be indeed a prodigy; nor do I believe it exists in the world." Miss Peterson said, "she believed that covetous people were in general consistent, and never departed from their main principles of selfishness." "In general, I grant you, Madam," returned he, "yet I believe it would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to cite an instance of any person, however miserly in general, who had not, in some particular instance of their lives, done generous, nay absolutely disinterested good actions; as," continued he, "the most liberal will have some little particularity to be brought against them, unlike the general tenor of their lives. I have seen persons, who, after bearing the loss of many hundreds, gratuitously lent, with the utmost philosophy, insupportable if they lost sixpence at cards. Very prudent persons are sometimes guilty of indiscretions, the giddiest have their lucid intervals. I

have seen extraordinary instances of patience in the most violent tempers, and the gentlest and most placid sometimes betrayed into indecent heat by the veriest trifles. Can any one look into his own heart, for an hour together, without being shocked at the inconsistencies it betrays? I repeat it, it is not given to human nature to be consistent, any more than to be perfect.

Saturday, May 14.

I heard my neighbour very early this morning, and called to ask if she was well? Being answered in the affirmative, and not feeling disposed to rise, I turned about, and was soon in the arms of Morpheus. I had slept quietly for perhaps an hour, when the door flew open, and Harriet rushing in, in the utmost agitation, threw herself on my bed! It was some time before I could learn

learn the cause of this abrupt entrance; she put her arms about me, wept and laughed by turns, and could give no account of what had affected her so extraordinarily. "You have been out"—she had her hat on—"has anything alarmed you? where have you been?"—"Alas!" said she at length, "I have been to my bower; I could not sleep, and rose to breathe the morning air:—it is strange that I should prefer that spot? but who do you think I found there? I have detected the sylph. Oh! my dear friend, I am so surprised, so frightened, and I'm afraid; so—so pleased." "Well," said I, "and who is it?" I durst not speak my conjectures. "Nay, cannot you guess?" said she, "are there many so delicate, so elegant, so refined. Ah! is there more than one Ewer?" "I hope," said I, "a little alarmed, you did not know?" "No, indeed," answered the innocent girl, with great eagerness, and colouring very high at my suspicion—no indeed—I strolled instinctively

stinctively towards the grove, almost without design; the flowers were covered with the morning dew, and exhaled the most grateful fragrance; two nightingales were answering each other from the hawthorn bushes; the sun was just rising in the utmost splendour of beauty. I stood awhile to contemplate this glorious spectacle, and felt my spirits revive with nature: the softest serenity filled my heart, which glowed with admiration and gratitude. As I viewed the sweet scene that surrounded me, I seated myself in the bower, and having with me G. Dyer's Poems, which Mr. Ewer brought us the other day, I turned to the beautiful Ode to Morning, and began reading aloud,

Child of the light, fair morning hour,
Who smilest o'er yon purple hill;
I come to view thy clearing pow'r,
Beside this murmuring rill:

Nor I alone, a thousand songsters rise,
To meet thy dawning and thy sweets to share,
While ev'ry flow'r that scents the honied air,
Thy milder influence feels, and shews the brightest dies.

A rustling among the leaves made me start and look round ; I caught the glimpse of a man retiring among the bushes, and was at first a good deal alarmed, till upon reflection I concluded it could be no one but Peter, so early at his work. I then ventured to look, and saw a tall person in a smock frock, with a watering pot in his hand, hastily retiring, as if to escape discovery—He turned round as I was looking; and probably thinking himself detected, bowed very low : indeed my dear friend, my surprise is not to be expressed when I saw that it was Mr. Ewer. I could hardly return his civility, but was obliged to lean on the arbour for support, I trembled so violently : while a consciousness of the impropriety of such a meeting destroyed all
the

pleasure the discovery might else have given me." "And what did he say? my dear," said I. "Alas!" returned she, "I hardly know; I recollect his first words, as he flew to my support. "Why are you alarmed, my beloved Harriet; yes, he said *beloved*. Can you think you have any thing to apprehend from a man who thus conceals his devotions from you; who, while he dedicates to you the half of his existence, has been hitherto content with the consciousness of it? Rest here again, my love, leading me to the bower; with what delight have I train'd and cultivated these sweets, in a spot consecrated to you! Ever since I have been privy to your friends design, I have prevented the day, to hasten to my cherished occupation, early retiring before even Peter was at his work, that I might decorate Harriet's bower undetected. Chance has discovered me. Allow me to hope that the spot will not suffer in your estimation on that account. Dear Harriet,
you

you look displeased ; must I regret an interview, I but just thought so delightful ? Oh ! had I but escaped detection in the delirium of happiness I so lately felt ; when I saw my lovely maid smile approbation on my labours, and listened enchanted to the sweet accents of her applause.” “ I beg you would let me go, Sir,” said I, “ indeed I had not the least suspicion, I could never have expected—.” “ Be assured, Madam,” said he, “ colouring a little, and letting go my hand, that I had not the smallest intention of intruding upon your retirement, only promise me you will not abandon it ; only say you will not shun and detest it because it has been raised by me, and I will give you my word of honour, never to approach when you are here alone ; or if you require it, to give up even the pleasure of cultivating my darling flowers.” “ Well, my dear, and what answer did you make ? ” “ I scarce know, my dear Mrs. Willars,” resumed she, “ he looked so hurt,

hurt, so distress—you know how interesting he is with that look—my eyes filled with tears, and had I ventured one word they would have overflowed.” “How am I to interpret this silence?” said he, “is it consent? Shall the bower still be Harriet’s? Shall it still be the solace of my pains? Will she again rest on the bench I have raised? gather the flowers I cultivate; listen to the warblers I shall bring—Hark! do you not hear one?” At this instant a bullfinch approaching familiarly, whistled in the sweetest tone, a favourite French air.

It seemed like enchantment; I was perfectly beside myself. “Indeed,” said I, when the bird had finished his tune, “I should be very sorry to be debarred coming here, but I’m afraid it’s dangerous. Let me go and get some food for this sweet musician.—“ You will then take charge

of him?" said he, " would I were thy bird!" " And did you answer with Juliet?" said I to her, " Sweet so would I, yet I should kill thee with much cherishing." " No indeed," said she, blushing, yet I own I thought of these words, and what I did say I don't know, but he seemed as pleased as if I had said them." However, I made my escape, and now tell me, my dear friend, what am I to think of all this?—

I availed myself of this opportunity, as you may suppose, my dear Edward, to reason with her very seriously: " I said I did not approve of declarations of love, without offers of marriage, or explanations of circumstances; that the opportunity was very favourable if he had chosen to have explained himself clearly, and like a man of honour; and that I would advise her to give him no encouragement, till he applied properly

properly to her friends." Poor Harriet looked very blank at these observations. She hesitated a little, and then said, "she hoped I was well-convinced that the meeting on both sides was accidental, that Mr. Ewer was evidently surprised into the sort of declaration he had made, of which it was clear he had no design; that there would be a glaring impropriety in proposing marriage, while he yet wore deep mourning for his first wife; and that with respect to his circumstances, she firmly believed they were at least as good as her own; that he appeared to have no turn for expence; and Oh!" continued she, " how gladly could I be poor with him!

I did not think it adviseable, my dear Edward, to run the risk of losing her confidence by too much opposition; her heart is deeply engaged, and I can do her more essential service by knowing all that passes there, than if by ill-timed severity. She

was induced to conceal it. I said, I was well enough acquainted with her discretion, to be assured she would avoid all private interviews; and that I had that opinion of her friendship and confidence in me, as to be convinced she would take no step, without at least apprising me of it. "Indeed, my dearest friend," said she, "I will conceal nothing from you; and to give you a proof of it, I will own to you, what I was long before I owned even to myself, that I have for some time been attached to him. If I know my own heart, the sort of affection I bear him was perfectly innocent; yet it was such as would have prevented my accepting, or even thinking of any one else. At present, that he is free; that he seems to return my affection;—ah! why must not I—." "My love," said I, "I cannot disapprove your partiality, I only entreat you as a friend, as one who is most warmly interested for your welfare, to be watchful over it. The more

more we are inclined towards any thing or any person, the more we should suspect our judgment—suspend yours—do not give way to the idolatry of your own thoughts; above all, enter into no engagement." "I will do nothing without consulting you. I will never see him without you. I will not conceal a thought from you," said she eagerly. I am too happy in so valuable a friend; but should I not write to Deacon without delay? I have deferred it too long." I agreed that it was proper, and she left me immediately to execute her project.

We have not been asunder since the whole day. Adieu! It is late.

Sunday, May 15.

The suiter came to dinner, as he usually does on Sundays. Harriet attempted to slide her letter into his hand, but he would not

not take it. "La! Miss Harriet," said he, "what's this for, why should you give me a letter?" "Because I wish you to know my mind, Sir," said she, mustering all her little courage, "and that you will not give me an opportunity of explaining it to you." Meanwhile her aunt pickt up the letter, which had fall .. "What's all this fuss about," said she, "as if you did not know one another's minds by this time? I shall take charge of the letter," and she put it in her pocket. Harriet's courage had done its utmost, her tears had like to have followed.

Mr. Ewer came in the afternoon; we all walked, and he accompanied us, but nothing particular occurred ; his behaviour to Harriet was not feigned : she, on her part, always kept close by me, holding by my arm when we were walking, and neither looking at nor speaking to Deacon ; who, after several rebuffs, at length said,

—“ Ah Miss, I know why you be so crois,
’tis because I would not take your letter
anon ; but to tell you the truth I be’n’t
much of a scholard, and I’ve no notion of
writing when one can speak.

Tuesday, May 17.

Yesterday being Whit-Monday and fair day at M---, I was prevailed upon to join the family party and to go thither. Mr Peterson took his daughter and niece with him in the morning, and sent back the chaise for his wife and me, who ate our dinners soberly before we set out. It is a festival of great celebrity here, and all the servants but one had permission to go. We found our party at Mr. Parkitt’s, with Mr. and Mrs. Bertram and Mr. Deacon. The house fronts the market-place, where the chief of the sports are going on. Harriet

was

was standing with an absent look at the window, and her swain seated as close to her as possible, was so afraid of losing his station, that he never moved the least on our entrance, or shewed the slightest civility to any one. Harriet made an attempt to escape from her confinement to come to me ; but this Arcadian youth, or dragon if you please, who had taken a cheering cup after dinner, was so elated by it as to pull her upon his knee. "Well done, Deacon," said Mr. Bertram, "that's as it should be, shame face never won fair lady." This disgusting freedom was the more mortifying to Harriet, as the window was so low it could be seen from the street ; and during the short interval that she was constrained to endure so disagreeable a situation, who should pass but Mr. Ewer ! I was at the other window; he saw me, bowed low, and catching a glance at Harriet, reddened violently, and passed on like an arrow. She probably would not have seen

him; but as I returned his salute, she looked round to see to whom I curtseyed ; and thus found, that however great her vexation was previously, it was possible for it to be much increased.

Harriet changed colour repeatedly, and after several efforts to escape from her tormentor, at length succeeded. " You are determined," said she, " to make me detest you." Her aunt huffed her, and desired to see no more of such airs. In hopes to relieve her, I proposed a walk round the fair, which was readily agreed to, and secured her arm in mine. She did not fail to thank me for this attention, for which she was extremely grateful. Knowing the aversion I have to such confusion and uproar, we went to a booth, where some gaudy ribbons and gew-gaws were displayed, in order to buy fairings for the maids. Here Mr. Peterson joined us, and insisted on giving some to us all. As I found the

the gift was not likely to be very expensive, I did not decline my share. He asked what coloured top-knot I chose? I said true blue, or willow green, and he layed out two shillings in a purchase for me, which I took care to return with interest^{to his} daughter, in a pretty toy, which seemed to take her fancy. I should not omit, that when fairings were talked of, Mr. Deacon slipt off unperceived. Harriet was diverted into good spirits by this little ~~sight~~ ^{spec} of her swain's disposition. Having purchased at a shop a gown for Sally, and being pretty well stunned with ballad singers, blind fiddlers, bawling mountebanks, and the sweet sounds of trumpets, tamboureens, squeaking whistles, &c. shoved about, too, by drunken people, and having shaken off that boor Deacon, Harriet and I slipt away from the company to Mrs. Parkitt's, where we waited quietly and without impatience their return.

Here we could observe the company at our ease. We saw most of our country neighbours pass; among the rest young Mr. Grove, with two smart lasses, to one of whom he was particularly attentive. Mr. Ewer likewise went by, but never looked towards the house ; and poor Harriet, whom this reminded of the awkward situation in which she had been seen, coloured with vexation, and could not recover her spirits any more that evening. It was late before our party could prevail on themselves to quit the scene I have described : at length Mrs. Peterson and I embarked. Harriet was constrained to wait, and had besides the *pleasure* of being escorted home by her beau, who had increased his score of conviviality, and was very chatty at least, if not entertaining. She returned heartily vexed and tired, and we both say they shall be clever who catch us at a fair again.— Sally and her fellow-servant were very late home, and were well lectured by their mistress.

mistress. Sally cried to me, and assured me it was none of her fault. The other girl had met with her sweetheart, and would not come away; and she was afraid to come alone. On the road they were insulted by some drunken fellows likewise returning from the fair; luckily for them Mr. Ewer came to their assistance: he had the humanity to see them within the bounds of security.

Sally protests against fairs almost as vehemently as Harriet and I; but her new gown, and a ribbon from Harriet, have put her into somewhat better temper with them.

Wednesday, May 18.

I have been with the two young ladies to Mr. Thomas Peterson's with some toys

which we purchased yesterday for his little boy ; 'tis a fine chubby, surly looking fellow, the picture of health, if not of good humour. Harriet had likewise made a purchase of a neat pocket-book, with instruments, which I thought was for herself ; however, she told me to-day, that she meant it for Miss Larimer, who, she had observed, was but ill provided with scissars, &c.

She filled it with housewifery furniture, and added a little emblematical picture of two hands joined, inscribed *l' Amitie* ; and proposed that we should go in the evening and carry it to her. I did not want this new proof of attention to a person, of whom she is certainly a little jealous, to be convinced of the excellence of her heart ; however, it endeared her to me the more ; and we set out with equal pleasure on the visit.

We found Mrs. Larimer very cheerful : her daughter was highly gratified with Harriet's present, particularly the picture, which she prest to her lips, and then put into her bosom ; assuring her that nothing should ever induce her to part with it.-- Both seemed to feel that some little cloud had overshadowed their union, and to see it disperse with equal satisfaction.

Thursday, May 19.

How came I to omit acquainting my love with a fine speech that was made me the other day? You are not here, my Edward, whose approbation alone I highly love! My vanity, in your absence, finds, however, some level, to prevent its being quite extinguished.

I was too old in the opinion of some of the company—I knew not for what. I have forgotten the objection, but perfectly retain the answer: it was so handsome—guess who, turning to Harriet, repeated these lines?

“ Just in the zenith of those golden days,

“ When the mind ripens ere the form decays.”

I did not affect to be deaf, but thanked the flatterer very cordially; and promised that I would acquaint you with his gallantry.

Friday, May 20.

Harriet often engages me to go with her to her bower; she has a good pretence for frequently resorting there to carry food to the little sweet musician.

The

The sylph gardener took care to provide him a safe retreat among the bushes, by the help of wire judiciously disposed ; this he leaves at our call ; and perching familiarly near us, pipes his sweet air, for which he is always rewarded by his fair mistress. He may, perhaps, find a mate, and have a family. Harriet apprehends that domestic cares might divert his attention from us. She is, however, determined not to lay any restraint on his liberty, nor his inclinations ; nor is he to be caged till we take in the evergreens.

Saturday, May 21.

We returned yesterday after a pleasant walk of some length by our favourite bower, to me, at this delicious season, almost as alluring, as to Harriet. We first visit my Edward's oak, we water the shrubs

that want refreshment, and then repair to Harriet's bower, sure to hear several nightingales, whose favourite retreat it is, and who fill the air with their melody.

We were both listening to this sweet concert of nature, afraid to speak lest we should lose a note of it, when we were interrupted by Mr. Ewer, who came upon us very unexpectedly. "I beg pardon," ladies," said he, as he advanced, "for intruding upon your retirement; but I have such good news to tell, as I hope will excuse my freedom; it is not for profane ears; and therefore I did not seek you at the house, where probably our conversation would have had witnesses." "Well," said I, "and what is it? it must be superlatively good, or we shall box your ears on both sides." "*It is* superlatively good, indeed, Mrs. Willars," returned he: "our friends, the Larimers, are secured from indigence for the rest of their lives." "How so?"

so?" we both exclaimed, "has the wretch Larimer at length relented?" "No, indeed, ladies, nothing so miraculous as that has really happened, though they must be led to believe so, that their feelings may be spared, while their distress is relieved. You have heard me speak of my friend Folving, and his former intimacy with these ladies.—I have long neglected him, and concealed from him the place of my retreat. Anxiety for the future destiny of these helpless women, at length induced me to break through my resolution of concealment, and apply to my old friend in their behalf: this step has had the happiest effects. I have just received an answer dictated in the handsomest terms; he engages himself by a deed, of which I am to have the possession, to pay them an annuity of a hundred pounds for their lives, to devolve to the survivor: he sends the first half year, with a charge to conceal carefully whence it comes.

I am going to deliver it as just arrived from Ireland, but could not deny myself the pleasure of imparting to their fair and generous friends the pleasing intelligence on my way; it is needless to enjoin them secrecy—you may believe, my dear Edward, and will one day partake the pleasure we felt at this *very* good news. Mr. Ewer stayed no longer than to announce it to us, and then hastily pursued his way. Heaven speed him! we both exclaimed before he was well out of hearing.

Sunday, 22.

After Mr. Ewer had left us last night, our discourse fell naturally upon discretion. Why is that word in general so misapplied, my Edward? Why is the person

who cannot keep the secret with which he is entrusted, called indiscreet?—The term is far too soft. He that betrays his trust is far worse than indiscreet—he is treacherous. I understand by discretion, the faculty of judging what is proper to be told or past over, even when no kind of caution has been given.

Monday 23.

We have seen the Larimers, my Edward, and given them such congratulations as real friendship dictates; they believe implicitly the story that has been contrived to spare their feelings. Poor Mrs. Larimer forgets her worthless husband's cruelty, in his supposed remorse. She has written a letter as kind and grateful as her warm heart can dictate to give him thanks. As

Mr.

Mr. Ewer is always the bearer of her letters, this, however, will be no difficulty.

He informed us, the other day, that Mr. Folving mentions to him the loss of his wife, who died, as it should seem, soon after I saw her at Bristol; for it was certainly her that I saw. She has left a little boy, of whom he speaks with great tenderness.

Tuesday 24.

I am just returned, my Edward, from a long day spent with the Larimers. There I met, by appointment, with Mr. Ewer; for we were to settle their household establishment, after something of a larger scale, now that they are become so opulent. We agreed with their landlady, that the whole house should be theirs, they paying her a moderate

moderate price for the use of her furniture. She has consented, for a further allowance, to do their household business, on condition that she is permitted to attend her old mistresses when not particularly wanted.

Mrs. Larimer has already given a proof of her benevolence, by taking Mrs. Smith's eldest girl to instruct, and teach to be useful as a servant. Harriet's whole heart is occupied with the good fortune of her friends; she forgets her little pangs and jealousies in her sympathy. Perhaps, too, for we are all but poor human creatures, she is not sorry to see an indirect communication opened between Miss Larimer and her old flame; particularly as there is no longer any obstacle to their being united.

Wednesday 25.

Mrs. Larimer's good fortune is already noised abroad. The gossips came here to be informed, if really she has taken her house upon her own hands; if really there is no danger of her becoming chargeable to the parish.

I believe, what I have thought it expedient to say of her circumstances, will procure her some visits, if not of kindness, of curiosity. We are all invited to a little merry-making at her house to-morrow.— Mrs. Peterson has consented to be of the party; for, poor woman, now that she can afford to give a dish of tea, she says, there is no reason for not going to see her.

Thursday

Thursday 26,

Mr. and Mrs. Parkitt came yesterday to drink tea, and brought with them a man from London; he was a smart little fellow, whom I was disposed to see with favour; because he is a seaman. He is lately arrived from a long voyage, and a service of some danger; where he is said to have distinguished himself: indeed he gave some very plain hints of it in his conversation; but in a lively rattling way that does not offend, nor appear assuming.— Among other things, he took upon him the defence of under-sized people, with some humour.

It is always us little fellows, ladies, said he, that have the most spunk. I apprehend that about the same quantity of mind is allotted to every one, however different the size of the vessel it is to be cased

cased in. Now suppose, for instance, half a pint of liquor, brandy, rum, gin—what you please, inclosed in a quart bottle, will it not become flatted, dead, and good for nothing? whereas, even small beer, close corked in a bottle, well filled, will become lively, animated, nay burst its bounds, as you must have often experienced: it is thus, with us little fellows, we are all energy and spirit.

The young man was certainly himself a case in point. He entertained us very much; and had a warm invitation from Mrs. Peterson to repeat his visit.

Friday 27.

Mrs. Larimer had omitted nothing yesterday, that attentive kindness could suggest, to give to her tea drinking party the air

air of an entertainment. The weather being warm and very fine, the tea things were placed under the shade of an extraordinary large apple tree, which overhangs a grass plot, that in happier situations might become a lawn. A rustic bench surrounds it; and a honey-suckle, now in full bloom, entwines its trunk, and fills the air with fragrance. Here our chairs were brought, and the tea-kettle placed on a chaffing-dish.

Mr. Ewer and his landlady were of the party; as well as Mr. and Mrs. J. Peterson, and their little boy. Our repast ended, which, however, took up some time, we were invited to enter the cottage, where an agreeable surprize awaited us; for Miss Larimer had procured the loan of a piano-forte from M—, and entertained us highly with her masterly execution, accompanied, at intervals, by Mr. Ewer on his flute: meanwhile the tea

tea things were removed ; and cakes, with an excellent syllabub, supplied their place in readiness for our return.

We stayed late for a tea visit ; for it was ten o'clock when we arrived at Southlands : Mrs. Peterson observing, by the way, that the old woman had made us very welcome. She entertained me with various other remarks, as she held by my arm ; but I was so attracted by the music of the nightingales, which lasted all the way, that I lost half her conversation.

This is your loss, my Edward ! for her ideas, which are really sometimes out of the way enough, I could transmit on paper ; but the harmony of these delightful songsters, which to ears so long unaccustomed to sweet native musick, would be such a regale—Alas, I cannot !

“ Sweet bird that shun’d the voice of folly!
“ Most musical!—most melancholy!
“ Thee, chauntress! oft the woods among,
“ I woo to hear thy evening song,
“ And missing thee! I walk unseen,
“ On the dry, smooth shaven green.
“ To behold the wand’ring moon,
“ Riding near her highest noon ;
“ Like one that hath been led astray,
“ Thro’ the heav’ns wide pathless way ;
“ And oft as if her head she bow’d,
“ Stooping thro’ a fleecy cloud.”

Saturday 28.

Mr. Deacon has not been here since his behaviour at the fair at M—, which gave Harriet so much disgust and mortification: this would be a great relief to her, if her more favoured suitor did not absent himself likewise. We have never seen him but at third places, except the evening he met us in the grove, to acquaint us with Mrs. Larimer’s good fortune: thus are our pleasures mix’d with pains! However, as Harriet has

now

now no reserves with me, she pours her griefs into the sympathising bosom of a friend, and they no longer prey on her spirits or her health : she preserves both in spite of occasional anxiety.

Yesterday I caught her addressing some plaintive verses to me ; they are unfinished, but I shall transcribe them for you.

“ To thee, dear friend, who oft hast lent
“ A pitying ear to my complaint ;
“ To thee, the hapless may impart,
“ The sorrows of a bleeding heart,
“ Assur’d in thy regard to find,
“ A lenient for the troubled mind ;
“ Soft sorrow’s sympathising sigh,
“ And mute compassion’s glist’ning eye.
“ Once more thy patient ear incline,
“ Attend once more the plaintive line ;
“ And mark how still, from day to day,
“ Increasing troubles mark the way ;
“ While that from which I hop’d relief,
“ Brings the completion of my grief ! ”

Sunday 29.

Oh, my Edward ! I have received your letter of the 3d March ; you say the climate injures your health, and that you have been on shore at M — to restore it. Alas ! what a resource ; what a place is that to restore health ! the grave of so many full of youth and vigour. Oh ! return to me, my Edward ! You require my attention, and the salutary air of Albion. We shall be rich enough ; and what has fame to do with happiness ? What advantage can atone for the loss of health ? — I shall fill a long sheet with such reflections as these, and a thousand reasons, and a thousand thousand tender intreaties to urge your return. This I shall dispatch by the next packet, perhaps it may reach you. You say you are better, but the cause of your indisposition existing, How can I be at peace ?

The 3d of March, my love, when you were thinking of your Sophia, I was attending

ing your dying aunt, and most certainly thinking of you.

Monday 30.

'Tis our wedding day, my Edward ; I know you drink my health, and every body here shall drink yours.—I treat to day.—I have ordered provisions, and invited company. The Larimers, Mr. Ewer, the Bertrams, the young Petersons, are the parlour guests ; and all Sally's family and Mrs. Hall are in the kitchen. 'Tis past eleven, and our party is but just broke up. I am a little tired of doing the honours. Adieu !

Mr. Peterson assures me that you have got a black wife ; this nonsense came into my head just now, and I am foolish enough to be uneasy. Sure you don't like those black women, Edward ?

Tuesday

Tuesday 31.

Mr. Peterson's nonsense has run in my head and disturbed my rest. I lay for some time sleepless, and when at length I forgot myself, it was to be troubled with frightful dreams.

Methought you lay on a sick bed, and two negro women were watching by you with great care. As I approached, they drew the curtains, and would not suffer me to see you. On a sudden it was I who lay on the bed, and these women held me down and attempted to stifle me. I awoke with the struggle, my imagination had formed, all over in a cold sweat, and was some time before I could recover myself. It was not yet morning, and but for shame and the fear of alarming my neighbour, I had certainly called her.

Wednesday, June 1:

Your poor Sophia had the vapours all day yesterday ; in the morning I wrote the few preceding lines, and attempted, some hours afterwards, to resume a task, usually so delightful to me. Harriet surprised me in the attitude of one going to write, hanging over the paper with a pen in my hand, but as unconscious of it, and using it no more than the picture of Pope, which hangs in the same posture over my desk. I know not how long I had remained thus ; however, I was not suffered to continue so.— Harriet seized me by the arm ; “ my dear Mrs. Willars,” said she, “ you must come with me to see how Mrs. Larimer has fared for her debauch of the other evening. She tied on my hat and cloak, and did with me as she pleased. Air, exercise, and the conversation of tender friends, did not fail of their effects. I returned quite cheerful, but was not suffered to be again alone.

In the evening we repaired to our grove, and having made the usual circuit,—for Harriet reserves her bower for the *bonne bouche*—we went thither the last. A rose tree just beginning to blow, with several buds in their opening beauty, had been conveyed there in a pot, since our last visits. If we could have been at a loss to know by what hand, it would have been sufficiently explained by a scroll which entwines the pot, with this line of Pope's—

"Here the first roses of the year shall blow."

Harriet's eyes first sparkled, and then moistened. Indeed I could not have forgiven her, had she been insensible to such a pretty piece of gallantry. It must be acknowledged, my Edward, that this man has a very charming way of making love, and if my young friend finds it irresistible, who that has a heart, a tender, generous feeling heart, can blame her? When he was here lately, though respectfully assi-

duous, and delicately attentive to her, I would have defied any person, not apprised of circumstances, to have guessed where his devoirs were paid. His way of flattering is the most insinuating possible—attentions always ready, yet never distressing—a sort of deference and interest, so engaging to the person for whom it is meant; so inoffensive to all others. In short, my dear Edward, you must allow me to say—he is a charming man.

Thursday, June 2.

In the afternoon of Monday, when I gave my treat,—my own particular company—need I say the Larimers, Harriet, and Mr Ewer? were somehow left to ourselves; and the conversation turned upon French poetry. Harriet, Miss Larimer, and I, like good Englishwomen, gave a very decided preference to that of our

own

own country ; and criticized with more warmth than judgment, that want of cadence in the French tongue, and dearth of poetical expressions, which, to our ears, seem to deprive verse of half its enchantment. Mr. Ewer, who is a perfect master of the French language, was however of another opinion, and these were nearly his arguments—"I believe, ladies," said he, "nay I am convinced, that the generality of French poetry—instances of particular excellence excepted—has much more intrinsic merit than ours. In English, a very common thought may be so tricked out by dint of poetical language and harmonious numbers, as to delight and mislead very tolerable judges ; while the French poetry admitting of no such disguise, must have point, some agreeable turn, or new thought to make it pass ; and you will find the songs of the French, and little fugitive pieces, abounding in this kind of merit, which certainly is the most solid, though it may not tickle

the ear, whatever our prejudices may say to the contrary.—Try them by the touch-stone of a translation, you will often find they improve in an English dress, while many an admired English little piece, translated into French, and thereby stript of its cadence and harmony, would never pass at all—I believe, moreover, that it is far more difficult to rhyme in French; for their rules are far more rigid, and do not admit of such licence as ours. Their rhymes must be alternate, masculine and feminine, and address to the eye as much as to the ear.” He concluded his observations with the following stanzas; with which I present you, as I think them very excellent; but the equivoque of the phrase *passer le tems*, defies all attempts at translation.

LE TEMS ET L'AMOUR.

Par le Comte de Segur.

A voyager passant sa vie,
 Certain vieillard, nommé le Tems,
 Près d'un fleuve arrive, et s'écrie ;
 Prenez pitié de mes rieux ans.

“ Eh quoi ! Sur ces bords on m'oublie,
 “ Moi, qui compte tous les instants !
 “ Ah ! mes amis, je vous envoie,
 “ Venez, venez passer le tems.”

De l'autre côté, sur la plage,
 Mainte fillette regardoit ;
 Et rouloit aider au passage,
 Sur un bateau qu' Amour guidoit.
 Mais une d'elles, bien plus sage,
 Leur répétoit ces mots prudents :
 “ Ah ! Souvent on a fait naufrage,
 “ En cherchant à passer le tems.”

L'Amour gaiment rolé au rivage,
 Il arrive tout pris du tems :
 Il lui proposoit voyage ;
 L'embarque, et abbandonne aux vents.
 Agitant ses rames légères,
 Il dit, et redit dans ses chants :
 “ Vous voyez bien, jeunes bargères,
 “ Quel' Amour fait passer le tems.”

Mais tout à coup l'Amour se lasse,
Ce fut toujours là son défaut ;
Le Temps prend la rame à sa place,
Et lui dit, eh ! quoi ! céder sitôt !
“ Pauvre enfant ! quelle est ta faiblesse,
“ Tu dors, et je chante à mon tour,
“ Crieux refrain de la sagesse :
“ Ah ! Le Temps fait passer l'amour.”

Friday, June 3.

Mr. Ewer came yesterday to invite the family to drink tea with him, and to see the humours of something they call a fair or revel, which was to be held on the Common, on the other side of farmer Clarke's. Mrs. Peterson readily accepted the invitation, the rest followed of course. Her daughter was particularly gratified with it: she made herself much smarter than the occasion seemed to require, and proposed an early dinner, that we might set out soon, and lose nothing of the entertainment. She prevailed, and undeterred by

by our recent experience of the fair at M—, we set out for that of Southlands. For my own part, my dear Edward, I had not at all forgotten it ; but, besides that it is irksome to affect being wiser than other people, I thought to have taken sanctuary when I pleased, in Mrs. Clarke's snug rustic parlour, or retired garden: in this, however, I was mistaken ; it was near a mile from the scene of action, and Mrs. Petersen having secured me by the arm, I was constrained to saunter up and down the rows of gingerbread and toy stalls, and assist at cheapening earthenware, till I was stunned and ready to sink. At length, however, she began to want her tea, and proposed to walk on to Mrs. Clarke's, where we arrived the first of the party.

I left her displaying her bargains to this good gentlewoman, and retired to an arbour in the garden, where I had leisure to write the following stanzas, before the remainder of the party arrived.

Epitome of human life,
 Behold a village fair,
 Contrast of jollity and strife,
 Of merriment and care.

Here crockery spreads the verdant ground,
 Pans, plates, and dishes see;
 Flower-pots and pitchers, crackt and sound,
 And sets of cups for tea.

Of Pedlar's stalls arrang'd in row,
 How glittering is the ware !
 Gay buckles, necklaces and bows,
 And top-knots for the fair.

Of cakes and spice-nuts shall I sing,
 All tempting to behold ?
 Of gingerbread each Queen and King,
 Their noses tipt with gold.

Of stalls for children fraught with bliss,
 Where round you hear them prattle ;
 Horses for master, dolls for Miss,
 And for the babe a rattle.

Of many a ballad singing whine,
 The unharmonious sound ;
 And blind musicians that combine,
 To deafen all around.

Wild beasts are here, and screaming birds,
 And puppet shows and apes ;
 Mountebanks free of drugs and words,
 And cheats in various shapes.

Here

Here they break heads, and there shake hands,
Now blood, now liquor flows;
Now friendly are the motley bands,
Presto—be gone——they're foes.

Here am'rous youths with each a mate,
Proffer gay toys or gloves;
And whisp'ring as they go, relate
The secret of their loves.

The gay, the busy, here you view,
For diff'rent ends repair:
Of mortals what a picture true,
Exhibits such a fair!

From my retreat, at length I saw our party enter like pairs into the ark, in the following order :

Mrs. Larimer with Mr. Ewer; Miss with Harriet; Mr. Peterson with Miss Groye, and Mr. John Grove with Miss Peterson. I was now summoned to tea, which being dispatched, Mr. Ewer proposed a raffle among the ladies, at a shilling each, for some toys, which were neatly covered up in a basket. Mrs. Peterson rather objected to the price, but being informed

that she would be sure to win something, laid down her shilling with some reluctance to let it go, and threw the first:— her number was nine; and she won a pair of gloves; as they were of kid and very good, she was well satisfied, and would even have put in again had it been allowed. Miss Grove, supposing she should have nothing, threw the dice; her number entitled her to some shoe roses: she was not quite pleased, and muttered discontentedly that Madam Peterson had all the luck. Mrs. Larimer being next called upon, won a handsome shawl, which did not reconcile Miss Grove the more to her lot. Miss Peterson next threw, and won a ring, the motto of which reconciled her to its insignificance, though it was very pretty, for it was address *to the fairest*. I was ready with my shilling, and threw after her; my number produced a *bon bon box*, far too elegant for the price. I shook my head at Mr. Ewer, for I began to suspect that the blind

blind goddefs had a guide, and was soon after convinced of it. Miss Larimer won a silver pencil, and Harriet a pair of bracelets, with exceeding neat clasps. Hope resting on an anchor is on one, and on the other a little dog, inscribed Fidel. All the company examined and admired this last lot, which distrest the envied possessor a good deal, while Mr. Ewer talked of Miss Harriet's having won the twenty thousand prize, with an air so unconscious of any design, that it really seemed to pass for her good luck with the company.

Mrs. Clarke having won a shawl, like Mrs. Larimer's, was well satisfied; and the basket, which still contained some trifles, was sent into the kitchen, where Mr. Ewer had previously caused the maids to be assembled:—we went to see the drawing; each had a ribbon or a necklace, except Sally, whose lot was a muslin handkerchief: they were not suffered to pay any

any thing, and were so delighted with this new method of giving fairings, that I dare believe Mr. Ewer thought his money well-employed.

The parlour guests were likewise in general well pleased ;—this unexpected and unusual piece of gallantry afforded great entertainment, and supplied us with conversation ; and calculations, on our return, of what might be the probable expence. As Mrs. Peterson chose to suppose that our shillings had in part defrayed it, I did not take upon me to contradict her, though perfectly convinced that the taking of our money was adding delicacy to generosity, in order to spare us the appearance of receiving a present. Harriet's bracelets cost no trifle, but her scruples of accepting them were quite done away by her aunt's example and opinion of their being of little worth. Thus she enjoyed her pleasure unalloyed, and explained the emblems in the

the sense most agreeable to her—hopes of success, and engagements of fidelity.

Our beaus, except Mr. Ewer, had all deserted us immediately after tea, and were not present at the raffle. This gentleman would, however, upon no account, suffer us to return, unattended, through all the perils of village jollity: he was our escort; and our walk home was, by no means, the least pleasant part of our scheme.

The evening was serene and beautiful; every one in good humour, and the fields of clover, beans in bloom, and refined grafts, through which we passed, so refreshing to the sense, that nothing could be imagined more delightful.

Oh, my Edward ! wer't thou but here !
Could I but waft the freshness of all those
sweets to thy burning shores ! I thought
of

of the impossibility, and have granted myself pleasures you could not partake.

Saturday 4.

Our hay-making is to begin on Monday. We are all on a bustle making preparations for it. There is a brewing on purpose for the poor hay-makers, which I could wish were of better beer: but I can only wish.

At Miss Peterson's request, I have attempted a translation of the French allegory I gave you a few days ago. I succeeded in giving her an idea of it; and having nothing better wherewith to fill up my journal, I present it, such as it is, to my Edward.

TIME AND CUPID.

His life in travelling always spent,
Old Time, a much renowned wight,
To a wide river's margin went,
And call'd for aid with all his might :
Will none have pity on my years,
I that preside in ev'ry clime ;
Oh, my good friends and passengers
Lend, lend a hand to pass old Time !

Full many a young and sprightly lass,
Upon the adverse bank appear'd ;
Who eager sought Old Time to pass,
On a small bark, by Cupid steer'd :
But one, the wisest, so I ween,
Repeated oft this moral rhyme ;
Ah, many a one has shipwreck'd been,
Thoughtless and gay, in passing Time !

Blythe Cupid soon the bark unmoor'd,
And spread the highly waving sail ;
He took old Father Time on board,
And gave his canvas to the gale.
Then joyous, as he row'd along,
He oft exclaim'd, observe my lasses ;
Attend the burthen of my song,
How sprightly Time with Cupid passes !

At length the urchin weary grew,
For soon or late 'tis still his case;
He dropt the oar and rudder too—
Time steer'd the vessel in his place.

Triumphant now, the veteran cries,
'Tis now my turn, you find young lasses,
What the old proverb says, is wise,
That love with time as lightly passes.

Sunday 5.

It is so hot to-day, my love, that when
I would have written I fell asleep. It is
growing cool, but Harriet calls to walk.
Adieu!

Monday 6.

If you should choose to settle in the
country and turn farmer, my dear Ed-
ward, I believe I could do honour to that
state of life; for I always feel myself ex-
tremely

tremely interested in all the œconomy of it. I listen, with attention, to Mrs. Peterson's details of her poultry yard and dairy; and have even picked up some little knowledge, the gleanings of the discourse I so frequently hear relative to agriculture. I may, perhaps, be able to give you advice, for I regularly make notes of every thing I hear with observation.

With this disposition, you may be sure, I saw, with great pleasure, the dawning of Aurora announce a fair day for our hay-making.

We are to drink tea at Mrs. Larimer's on Wednesday, because the meadow adjoining her cottage is Mr. Peterson's, and the first where he begins to mow to-day. I shall, perhaps, handle the rake a little.

Prepare to see me as brown as a gypsey.

Tuesday

Tuesday 7.

While the heat is so overpowering to me, how fares it with my love? perhaps a raging fever burns his veins; perhaps stretched on the bed of sickness he calls, in vain, on his Sophia—Perhaps even the remembrance of her is lost in the bitter pangs of the moment—Perhaps he now breathes his last sigh, far from his wife, his friends, and country, among strangers in a foreign land, the grave of so many! Perhaps—just here entered Harriet, unperceived: I was weeping over my paper, and she came softly behind me, and took the pen out of my hand. O fye, Mrs. Willars, she says, looking over me, what suppositions are these? Come, do let me suppose a little: Perhaps he is slaking his thirst with ananas, in an orange grove: perhaps he is taking a nap, while the black negroesses fan him to repose. Perhaps

haps he is enjoying a cool sea breeze, facing the quarter deck, and sending sighs and wishes to Albion. Perhaps he sails homeward with a favouring gale: perhaps we may shortly see him at Southlands.

Stop there, you dear, kind, flattering girl, you can add nothing to that last supposition. "Oh, could I suppose so too!" "And why not, my dear friend?" she says; "what is there so improbable in it? Mr. Willars has certainly your letter of last March, pressing his return long ere this; now that his health seems to make it necessary—why should he not comply with your earnest desire? He has been gone near a twelvemonth—has he not? Sure he may obtain leave of absence when so many reasons call for it."

Notwithstanding the gloom of my imagination, I felt extremely disposed to be convinced by Harriet's reasoning. She continued

continued chatting with me till the tea hour; and quite succeeded in chacing away my spleen.

Miss Peterson joined our evening walk, which was long and very delightful. The secret inclination she cherishes, gives her a little penserofo air, well suited to our sentimentals; and if she did not add much of her's to our conversation, her pensiveness seemed, at least, not to disrelish it. However, after a silence of some time, whether from absence or design, I will not say, she suddenly took it into her head to ask Miss Larimer's age; and when I answered, that I supposed it was about five and twenty, she wondered Mr. Ewer and she did not make a match of it; as it was high time for both of them, if ever they intended it.

You cannot think how much this heedless speech damped Harriet's spirits.

Wednesday

Wednesday 8.

The mowers have just brought the nest of an unfortunate partridge, whom they cut in two in her close attention to her maternal duties. The eggs are consigned to the care of a common hen ; but the fate of the poor mother quite distresses me.

Whence is it, Edward, that every thing that is unhappy, seems to have such claims upon my heart? Am I doomed to be so too? and therefore attracted by some secret sympathy, to what is to be my own fate? Heaven's will be done ; if t be prosperous one must be unfeeling—be adversity mine by choice!

ELEGY

ON A PARTRIDGE CUT IN TWO BY THE MOWERS AS SHE WAS.
SITTING.

Say, tender mother, to thy fate,
Shall none the Muse invoke?
No plaintive strain thy tale relate,
Or rue the murd'rous stroke?

What time athwart the rip'ning blade,
With glitt'ring dew-drops crown'd,
Devious my carelefs footstep stray'd,
And thy retirement found.

Thy palpitating heart confess,
The fearful human form;
And closer clung thy panting breast
Toward the threaten'd harm.

With ~~ca~~ ^{ca}utous tread, how oft I sought
The interesting scene!
And frequent fresh supplies I brought
Of grain to strew the green.

At length familiar to my view,
Close crouching to thy nest,
No more thine eyes with fear pursue,
Thy inoffensive guest.

Ah, fatal day! at morning blythe,
I saw thy fence unbroke;
At eve the mower whets his scythe,
And deals the deadly stroke.

To thee no more shall morn succeed,
Thy tale † of days is told!
At eve, I hear the piteous deed!
Thy sever'd corse behold!

Thursday, June 9.

We did not so much depend on the assistance we could give the hay-makers in their work yesterday, as to neglect a surer way of being serviceable to them. We therefore loaded ourselves with a basket of somewhat better fare than their customary allowance. Mrs. Larimer had her table spread under an old oak, which shades a corner of the field. The seats were hay-cocks, and after we had finished our tea, we distributed some to the hay-makers, with plenty of brown bread and butter. I never enjoyed any thing more than the pleasure

it appeared to give them. Mr. Ewer was gentleman-usher to our rustic guests ; 'twas he that handed the tea, and took care that every body should be well supplied. There were six women and four men, whom he seated in a circle on the hay : they were all in high spirits, yet all behaved with great decorum. Mr. Ewer had brought his flute, and an occasional song, in which we all joined chorus. Each of us in turn pretended to handle a rake or prong, and paid a forfeit for our awkwardness ; while Miss Peterson and Harriet were tossing the hay at one another in high glee. Mr. Peterson and Deacon came unperceived behind them ; they had both been visiting their respective grounds, and drinking down their fatigue at the plough : the latter, emboldened by the liquor he had taken, and perhaps by the glow of enjoyment on Harriet's countenance, advanced unsuspected behind her, and catching her in his arms threw her on the hay. Vext and really frightened at this

this rude attack, she screamed aloud ! and presently disengaging herself by dint of efforts that proved how much she was in earnest, she ran first to her uncle, then to me, with her cheek glowing as much with resentment, as it had so lately done with pleasure and hilarity.

All this past so instantaneously, that I had hardly time to observe its effect on the spectators. Mr. Ewer's emotion it was however not possible to overlook ; he was surprised out of all his usual self command, and addressing Deacon, asked him sternly, how he dared to take such liberties with that young lady ? Deacon, violently alarmed, stammered out, " that he meant no harm ; that—that he had made a mistake." "A mistake, indeed !" said Mr. Ewer, " I would advise you, Sir, to beware of such for the future ; though Miss Harriet be an orphan, she has a protector at hand." Mr. Peterson listened to this dialogue with evident

dent displeasure, but took no notice of it; his niece on the contrary brightened up, and seemed quite to forget the affront in the champion it had procured her.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Larimer approached the two gentlemen last arrived, with offers of refreshment, which were readily accepted; and seemed to settle all differences. The tea was again served, and afterwards some cool tankard, to which they did great honour. Deacon never once ventured to look towards Harriet while Mr. Ewer stayed. This constraint was, however, not long, for whether he repented of the heat he had betrayed, or grew tired of this addition to the party, I know not, but he very soon went away.

Friday, June 10.

I have obtained a copy of Mr. Ewer's hay-making song, which here follows:—
I rather suspect it to be his own.

SONG.

SONG.

The Lark alarm'd, her fear conveys,
 In fond distressful cry ;
 While hov'ring round, she oft betrays,
 Where yet her nestlings lye.
 Arise, my love, and hasten away,
 To toss and turn the fragrant hay.

Arise, my fair ! fresh morning calls,
 And hasten with me blythe ;
 To where the verdant harvest falls,
 Beneath the mower's scythe.

Arise my love, &c.

Behold the glorious orb of day,
 In pomp sublime arrives ;
 The mists and shadows clear away,
 And Nature's face revives !

Arise my love, &c.

For thee I've drest a rustic bow'r,
 Of fragrant woodbines twin'd ;
 Of eglantine and May's fair flow'r,
 And sweet seringa join'd.

Arise my love, &c.

With new mown hay I've strewn the ground,
 And rais'd a turfy seat ;
 With mossy verdure cover'd round,
 And leaves of roses sweet.

Arise my love, &c.

There rest, my lovely maid, awhile,
 From Phœbus' sultry ray ;
 Sure by thy presence to beguile
 The labours of the day.

Arise my love, &c.

If, chance, the cooling zephyr blow,
 And Sol his radiance shroud,
 My fair awhile the hay shall throw,
 To share my task allow'd.

Arise my love, &c.

'Tis she the cooling cup shall deal,
 To parching labour free ;
 And o'er the brim her lip shall steal,
 To sweeten it for me.

Arise my love, &c.

Oh, come, my love ! the draught prepare,
 From yon translucent stream ;
 Oh, come and soften ev'ry care,
 And realize my dream !
 Arise my love, and haste away,
 To toss and turn the fragrant hay.

Saturday, June 11.

I know not, my Edward, whence arises the opinion, that persons of superior understandings are commonly given to censure; 'tis an observation one hears continually, yet it is certainly unfounded. It was but yesterday that a lady of M—, remarkable for a good understanding, and a taste for literature, happened to be the subject of conversation; Miss Grove, who was here, immediately observed, "that Mrs. —— was very clever to be sure, but extremely severe." You may judge from what I have so frequently said of our fair neighbour, with what propriety this remark came from her. Rather doubting the truth of it, I have since enquired of Miss Peterson, who knows the lady in question, and has often met her at Mrs. Parkitt's. She assures me, that as far as she has had opportunity of judging, nothing can be more ill-founded than Miss Grove's remark.

mark. "I have been present at M—," she said, "when the whole circle have been tearing their dear friends all to shatters, and never saw Mrs. B. join in the cry: on the contrary, she would sit silent, and appear disgusted." "But her silence, my dear," said I, "facitly condemned the rest; it was a reflection upon them, and this is perhaps what Miss Grove calls severe." "I believe indeed," said Miss Peterson, who is herself strikingly exempt from this defect, "that she had no better reason."

In effect, my dear Edward, I have ever observed a propensity to detraction arise from conscious inferiority. People unfurnished with better materials to entertain themselves or company, are wont to scrutinize other people's affairs, and to censure their conduct, to reduce them as near as possible to their own low standard. Thus, in proportion as persons are ignorant and uneducated, you will find the disposition to this vice

vice more glaring ; till in the lowest ranks, slander becomes calumny, and gains credit in exact proportion to its improbability.

Our little village teems with histories so absurd, so groundless, so unaccountable, that one cannot but admire at least its fertility of invention. Not a day but supplies its news, the more improbable the more palatable, and the more difficult to disprove : for a taste for the marvellous is as natural to the ignorant, as one for defamation.—When cultivated minds are debased with this vice, it is certainly as much more glaring as it is more culpable, for they have no excuse. A little reading, well digested, a taste for inquiries into nature, or any science whatever, ought, and I believe generally does, so agreeably occupy the mind, and furnish topics for interesting conversation, as to preclude the deplorable necessity of diving into other people's affairs,

and exposing their errors for entertainment.

Sunday, June 12.

The Bertrams dined here to-day; the lady swells in the waist without falling away in the face, and looks wonderfully well; she said, "they had heard at Rosefield of our junketings; so—Mrs Larimer is so got up in the world as to give entertainments; times are altered since her daughter went a-begging: but they say Mr. Ewer is married to her, or worse."

I could not prevail upon myself to answer this speech, which a glance I cast at her ear-rings rendered more provoking. Her sister, however, informed her that Mrs. Larimer had obtained a genteel allowance from her husband, and the subject dropt. I am at a loss to account for this acrimony

acrimony in Mrs. Bertram, who, though light, is not ill-natured ; but there is nothing we are less willing to forgive others, than our injustice towards them. Perhaps her purchase of the lace, so much under its value, may lie heavy on her conscience. Mr. Deacon dined here, as he usually does, on Sundays ; he scarce ventured to look at his mistress ; but took care to mention several times the village reports, relative to Mr. Ewer and Miss Larimer. He said, “ he was well-informed there had been a licence taken out, but whether the parties were as yet married he could not tell ; he was sure they ought to be so, however they might attempt to throw dust in people’s eyes.

Mrs. Bertram enquired what I thought of it, for to be sure I was in the secret. “ You know me but little then,” said I, “ if you think I shall divulge it : if I am not trusted, I cannot ; if I am, I shall not betray the confidence reposed in me.”

Monday, June 13.

If you could but know, my dear Edward, to how many stories our little merrymaking last week has given occasion, you would surely acquiesce in my observations of Saturday. All who were not of the party, both gentle and simple, are affronted. Some censure Mrs. Larimer's extravagance; for the treat of tea is magnified into a sumptuous dinner; others the levity of the company, who are reported to have mingled in a dance with Irish hay-makets. The rich farmers are all outrageous that the poor should be amused, and say we shall spoil them for work. Mr. Ewer's pet has not lost in the carriage; he is said to have been rude to Harriet, and insolent to Deacon, who rebuked him: — but the most popular of all the reports is, that Mrs. Ewer and Miss Larimer were married that morning; and had taken the opportunity to celebrate their nuptials.

Harriet now recollects many circumstances that give her uneasiness. Mrs. Larimer said, that Mr. Ewer called in the morning before they were up, and waked them. "I suppose, Ma'am," she says, "it was with that song: it was certainly addressed to Miss Larimer." "Indeed, my dear," I replied, "you are supposing what is very improbable: I know to whom it was much more likely to be addressed; but to punish you, I will not say." She smiled, and blushed; and presently recovered her spirits.

Tuesday 14.

The weather has been extremely favourable for our hay-making: it goes on apace; and I am almost as well pleased as Mr. Peterson. The last load from the meadow, by the river, is to be carried to-morrow night;

night; and as he loves conviviality, he has desired that an entertainment, somewhat in the style of Mrs. Larimer's, may be prepared against the time. All the neighbours are to be invited, and it will be far more costly, and, probably, not half so pleasant.

I am called to contribute my aid, and must bid you adieu.

Thursday 16.

I was busied all the morning of yesterday, my dear Edward, in assisting the other females of the family to prepare for the entertainment of the evening. It was fortunately recollected that the mansion-house afforded a tent: this was to be procured.—When arrived, it was found to be so out of repair as to require great pains to

to make it of any use ; however, we succeeded ; and it was stretched in the meadow, at a convenient distance from the river, and within sight of another field where the hay-makers are still employed. A table was spread with refreshments ; a fire kindled for the convenience of boiling the water, and chairs and benches placed for a numerous company : happily the weather was moderate ; for the tent could, by no means, afford shelter to all the guests.

After the tea-drinking was over, which had lasted till it became tiresome, the company divided into parties ; some walking, some romping, some remaining in the tent, where the glass circulated very briskly. Mrs. Peterson, Mrs. Bennett, and some others of the same stamp, had formed a little gossiping circle in one corner, while their husbands were drinking in the other.

Mrs.

Mrs. Larimer had declined being of the party: her daughter, Harriet, and I, strolled along the water's edge, admiring the clearness of the surface, which, unruffled by the smallest breeze, reflected distinctly the clouds, the trees, and every object that presented itself on the margin.

Some of the younger part of the company had repaired to the adjacent meadow, where they diverted themselves with tumbling about the hay, and throwing it at each other. Of these were all the Figginses, Miss Peterson, Deacon, Groye and Mr. Thomas Peterson, who was as gay as the best of them. It had been settled, that after the company retired, who were all engaged to sup at Mr. Peterson's, what remained of the liquor and provisions should be left to the hay-makers.

We were all engaged, as I have said, each according to their tastes, so intently, that

that the clouds gathered unobserved; and a loud clap of thunder first gave notice of an approaching storm. It was a signal that drew us together; all crowding to the tent, though it could not shelter one half; and already it began to rain. Our first impulse had been to run with the rest, had not Mr. Ewer prevented us. "Be advised by me, ladies," said he, "Mrs. Larimer's is the nearest house, let us make for that: the tent cannot shelter you.—We may, perhaps, arrive at Mrs. Larimer's before the storm comes on with any violence." Miss Larimer backed his advice; and Harriet taking my arm, we followed their lead. We walked, or rather ran, till Miss Larimer, who has but weak health, was quite breathless. We slackened our pace to relieve her; and Mr. Ewer forced her to take his arm; but a louder clap of thunder soon made us double our pace, and the rain fell in torrents; so that we were

wet.

wet through long ere we could reach our destined port.

Mr. Ewer arrived first with Miss Larimer, and then hastened back to escort us; in the instant that we lost sight of him—it was but an instant—another dreadful clap so terrified us both, that we remained motionless on the spot; while Harriet, pale and trembling, loosed her hold of me, and sunk on the ground. By this time Mr. Ewer was returned.—“You are safe, my Harriet,” said he; “there is no danger.” Mrs. Willars, the worst is over,” continued he, as he lifted Harriet from the ground. He would have carried her; but she absolutely refused; and he took us under each arm. In an instant we were under Mrs. Larimer’s hospitable straw roof. The good old lady was rejoiced to receive us there; she had watched the gathering of the storm with great anxiety, and had been extremely alarmed for us all.

With

With her assistance we were soon furnished with dry petticoats, and a little cordial by way of prevention. The storm lasted above an hour with great violence, and then went off almost as suddenly as it came on.

We now thought of rejoining our company at Mr. Peterson's, where it was probable they would assemble. Miss Larimer declined returning with us. We arrived before great part of the company; for some had remained in the tent, some had taken shelter at different cottages, and some retired to their respective homes.

The Miss Figginses, with Miss Peterson and young Grove, were, however, arrived just before us. They were wet to the skin, which they seemed to think a very good joke; for they were laughing immoderately. Mrs. Peterson, upon whom the same cause operated very differently, was scolding

scolding and calling for dry things: and some were drying themselves quietly by the kitchen-fire. At length the confusion ceased, and we all assembled to supper in the hall. The little difficulties we had experienced, enhanced the enjoyment of ease and comfort, and inspired universal good humour. The song and the jest went round. The gentlemen made themselves very merry at the distress the ladies had been in; inquired how they did after their bathing; betted which ran the best—who had the handsomest leg, &c.

After abundance of this kind of wit, Mr. Ewer was called upon for his hay-making song, which he gave with great applause. Some of the company, however, observed, that the lady to whom it was addressed was not present; he made no answer; but looking tenderly at Harriet, requested that she would likewise address a song to some one not present. To my utter

utter surprise, and still more, I believe, to his, after being a little intreated by the company, she sang to the Scot's tune of Pinky House, the stanzas annexed. I recollect as she was singing them, that Mr. Ewer had brought her lately a large nosegay, from which selecting a moss rose, he said, " You will wear this, Miss Harriet."— Thus the matter was explained to him and me; as to the rest of the company, the song had no particular meaning, and past off like any other.

The object to whom it was addressed, appeared to have, however, some difficulty to conceal the pleasure it gave him. He thanked her with one of his expressive looks; and soon after requested me to procure him a copy. This I could not obtain: I have, nevertheless, one for you and me—which follows:

Friday 17.

HARRIET'S SONG.

The flow'rs you gave all droop their heads,
 And faint and faded are;
 They languish for their native beds,
 In spite of all my care:
 In vain I made their cup replete,
 From each refreshing stream;
 And shelter'd from the noon-tide heat,
 And Luna's colder beam.

Careful I prun'd each tender stalk,
 From blighted leaves away;
 And wore them only in my walk,
 Towards the closing day.
 Yet, ah! they droop their languid heads,
 In spite of all my care;
 But ever grateful fragrance sheds
 The rose you bade me wear.

Saturday

Saturday 18.

Among the jests which circulated the other evening, were some upon the marriage-vow. "I remember," said Mr. Peterson, "how my wife bungled at the word obey; how did you like it, Mrs. Willars? Did you speak out bold?" "I made no difficulty of it, Sir," said I, "for it always appeared to me the only part of the vow that is altogether in a woman's power. I may obey my husband if I will, but whether I can love and honour him, depends absolutely upon him. I cannot honour a man whose conduct, principles, or character are depraved, and unworthy of esteem. I cannot honour a drunkard, a libertine, a miser, or a profligate; nor can I love one whose manners are unamiable, whose temper is violent and unequal, or who no way seeks to engage my tenderness; but obey him, as I said before, I certainly may, if I please." "There again," said Mr. Peter-
son,

son, "there she has us; catch that lady at a loss." These, however, are my serious sentiments, Edward, so look you to it; and when I no longer love or honour you, blame yourself:—when I no longer love you, oh! what an idea! then must this heart be cold indeed.

Sunday 19.

A messenger is just arrived from Rosefield with news of the indisposition of Mrs. Bertram, which seems to threaten a premature *accouchement*. Mrs. Peterson, in great alarm, is preparing with her daughter to go and see her. Harriet is left housekeeper; she is to have my advice and assistance in an affair of such concern.

Adieu my love! I am going to try to acquire a little experience in the business of domestic œconomy, against the time! so anxiously

anxiously desired, when I may exercise my little talents for my Edward and myself.

Monday 20.

Harriet and I were busied in our new office this morning, when we were agreeably interrupted by the arrival of Miss Larimer with a basket of apricots, the first fruits of a very early tree which clings to the south side of their cottage, and commonly produces well. With much entreaty, and a promise of sending word to her mother, we prevailed on her to stay dinner. The master vanished the moment he had swallowed his, and left us quite at liberty. The weather being sultry, Harriet proposed that we should spend the afternoon in her bower. Sally readily undertook to bring us our tea there; we took books and work, and set off immediately.

Miss Larimer, who had not seen it very lately, was delighted with the improvements that have sprung up, as it were by enchantment, in so short a time ; nor were we, its constant visitors, without our share of agreeable surprise, for the sylph, Mr. Ewer, as at command, has conveyed hither since yesterday, a beautiful myrtle in full bloom, which takes place of a pot of honeysuckles now beginning to fade. Nothing is suffered to languish, or present the image of decay here. If a flower droops, it disappears, and is succeeded by some opening sweet of fresher fragrance and more lively hue.

Sweets, in succession, take their place,
And thus my fair will try,
For, ev'ry year that steals a grace,
A virtue to supply.

Miss Larimer was the first to observe this scroll round the myrtle. " You have a moral sylph, Miss Harriet," said she.
Harriet

Harriet blushed, but appropriated the lines by putting them in her pocket. "Now do, my dear," said I, "let Miss Larimer hear your new song, for I like it much, and we are all snug and *entre nous* here." She readily complied, and acquitted herself with so much grace and expression, that equally delighted, we both called out encore. "I believe you flatter me," said she, "but to convince you that I would entertain you if I could, I'll begin again." She performed even better than the first time—she was again encored, but it was from behind the scenes. "Good heavens!" said she, starting up, "who is there listening, I'm sure I had no notion—" "of such misfortune," said Mr. Ewer, making his entry from behind the bower; "but be not offended, Miss Harriet, these ladies will both tell you how impossible it is not to listen when you sing. I have now learnt the words of your charming song in spite of you; but, ladies, I beg pardon for my

intrusion. I am just returned from M—, and have brought a letter for Mrs. Willars; Sally told me where to seek you, and I flatter myself I shall still be allowed a dish of tea for my pains.” I took the letter, thanking him, and promising him what he so modestly required for postage. It was from your cousin’s attorney, my love, to say, that, as my particular legacy was to be paid in six months after his mother’s decease, he wished to know to whom I would have it remitted in London.

I have determined to leave it in his hands till I hear from you; for the more this money is exclusively my own, the less I choose to appropriate it.—Am not I, and all that I possess, my Edward’s? Mr. Ewer having obtained leave to drink tea with us, went to the house to assist Sally in bringing it; this addition to our party made it quite complete. “My good genius,” said Mr. Ewer, “has been watchful over me to-day; every

every occurrence has favoured my wishes, and this charming surprise crowns all. Well; as I love your mother, Miss Larimer, I am glad she is not here; she would be telling me that so much good must needs be succeeded by evil, and that some great misfortune hangs over my head."

"I don't think my mother would seek to damp your satisfaction, Sir," said Miss Larimer; "you have had sorrows enough to be entitled to a little joy; as for us, we suspect every thing that looks like pleasure to be only a treacherous phantom—we have been so often deceived, that till lately, even hope seemed to fail us, but Providence never did; and we have every reason now to be thankful and happy." "There is something in this spot," said Mr. Ewer, "that reminds me of the little wood at your father's seat of the elms, where we have spent so many happy hours." "I am of your opinion," returned she, "it awakes many interesting remembrances; that seat is all

I regret of our ancient splendour, though Mr. Ewer, we have spent there many sorrowful hours too ; but there is a pleasing melancholy even in those recollections, for they are unmix'd with remorse." — How often have Maria and I amused ourselves in holiday times in that wood! " Those were pleasant days, Mr. Ewer!"

" Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
A stranger yet to pain!"

repeated he, with folded arms, and a deep sigh to the memory of his amiable sister. After taking a turn or two away from us, he returned, " Should you settle at a distance from this place, Miss Harriet," said he, " will you ever think of it with interest?" " I hope I never shall be settled at a distance from it," said she, " though, if my evil stars have so much misery in store for me, its remembrance will always be my greatest pleasure—I shall be like the little sentimental school-boy, who asked leave

leave of his master to walk to and fro, and think of his grand-mamma. In all my rambles I shall think of my bower, and the dear friends I have there conversed with."

"Of your bull-finck," said he, seating himself beside her, "of all the other little winged inhabitants, whose artless melody is not less engaging?" "Of the sylph too," said I, "who changes and nurses the flowers; who writes sometimes moral, sometimes flattering verses, who is only visible in his works? Do you think he means to be forgotten, Mr. Ewer? *you* that are a little in his secrets?"—I thought he coloured a little. "Nobody loves to be forgotten, Mrs. Willars; the image of absence, nay of death itself, owes half its bitterness to the idea of being forgotten; do not we all strive to survive ourselves?" "Well, it shall not be forgotten then," said I.—Remember thee!" turning round as if addressing the sylph—Ah! thou dear shade!—repeat that line of Shakespeare's after your

friend Miss Harriet," said he ; she complied, half seriously, and repeated it with some emphasis. This is a specimen of our conversation-pieces, Edward, just to give you an idea how we spend our time in the absence of our friends.

When evening began to close, we accompanied Miss Larimer on her way home, and Mr. Ewer left us to escort her : she took his arm with the confidence of an old acquaintance : Harriet changed colour a little, and if they were seen by others, the village gossips will have a fresh supply of fuel to animate their conversation.

Wednesday 22.

I did not interrupt the thread of my Monday's narrative to fresh date it, Edward, but the greatest part of it was written

ten yesterday. I likewise answered the attorney's letter, and sent it to the post by Mr. Peterson. We are in hourly expectation of our ladies; they must find us at our posts.—Adieu !

Thursday 23.

Mrs. Bertram is so well recovered that she is returned with her mother and sister, to spend a little time with us. Mrs. Peterson fancying that her daughter's too close attention to her domestic affairs at this busy season, has been the cause of her indisposition, has prevailed upon her to change the scene, and take a little repose, or rather recreation—for the whole week is already laid out in plans of amusement—this is what she likes; she complains heavily that Rosefield is dull, and has no neighbourhood. I would willingly

lingly escape being of these parties, but that I cannot well, without running the risk of giving offence. We are beginning our round of visits with the Bennets.

Harriet dislikes this plan for the week even more than I.—She stands still less chance of being excused from it: indeed she does not attempt evasion; she only wishes devoutly that it was over.

Friday 24.

You are already acquainted, my Edward, with the company where we yesterday spent the afternoon: I have nothing new to relate of them. Mrs. Bertram was disappointed and displeased that we met no other company: the weather was wet, and we were confined within doors.

Mr. Bennet, who has a great deal of hay down, was out of humour; his wife was

was too nearly concerned to be much otherwife. She accused her husband of neglect, and said it was entirely his fault that the hay was not carried in a week ago. He bid her hold her tongue and mind her spinning, and this matrimonial dialogue was growing louder apace, when it was luckily interrupted by the arrival of Mr. Peterson. Mr. Bennet then ordered pipes and strong beer; and the ladies were placed at a party of Pope Joan, which lasted till I was almost asleep; but our visit did not end with it. Mrs. Peterson was determined to stay supper, as Mrs. Bennet had lately supped with her, and availed herself of but a very cold invitation; nothing could be clearer, than that it was neither convenient nor agreeable.

After supper the gentlemen got into chat in the way of their profession; they did not omit frequently to refresh themselves with hot punch; and Mr. Peterson

was immoveable. In vain Mr. Bennet threw out hints of fatigue, and his wife of the lateness of the hour; in vain we yawned, and were silent; it was past midnight when this charming party separated; and then we talked all the way home of the agreeable evening we had spent.—So pleasant to some dispositions is every thing that is not home!

Saturday 25.

None of the other neighbours choosing to see us this afternoon, it was settled that we should spend it at Mrs. Larimer's.

Harriet and I are going to give her notice of the honour intended her.

Sunday 26.

Mrs. Larimer has so much cordiality and kindness in her manner of receiving her

her guests, that spleen itself would scarce resist a temptation to be pleased. Our party of yesterday was very much disposed to be so. The straw roofed cot, the homely furniture, were shades in the picture, which only served to set off, to more advantage, the cheerful countenances, the hearty welcome, and easy hospitality of our hostess. An excellent dish of tea was presently served round, with some nice brown bread and butter, of which Mrs. Bertram finished a whole plate to her own share, in order to console Mrs. Larimer, in the concern she expressed at not having had time to make us cakes.

We afterwards engaged in a very agreeable chat, without one word of slander.—Miss L—— had music in readiness, whenever the conversation began to flag; in short, we had hardly perceived the absence of one of our party, Mr. Ewer, if Mrs. Larimer's repeated lamentations had not

not reminded us of it: "Our poor friend will be *so* sorry," said she, "and I could not find a little boy, this busy time, to send him word of the favour you intended me.—What a pity!" We comforted the good lady as well as we could, by laughing and eating very heartily, and returned home late in the evening, in perfect harmony of spirits, enjoying, all the way, the sweet serenity of an unclouded sky, with just enough of freshness in the air, to allow us to trip on at a smart pace, in unison with our feelings.

Mrs. Bertram observing that she did not expect to spend such a pleasant evening, "but the old woman is *so* hearty," said she.

Monday 27.

We are setting off on a jaunt to M—. I have just time to bid good Morrow to my Edward; while Mrs. Peterson, who is already half an hour behind the time she herself appointed, is running backwards and forwards to give orders, or seek things she had forgotten, and thus dispose of another half hour, in order to even the account, and give us the benefit of the meridian sun, on a day that promises to be rather sultry. The rest of the party are fretting, and I am writing to my love.

She calls—Adieu !

Tuesday 28.

In our way to M— yesterday, Mrs. Peterson, Mrs. Bertram, and I, being together

gether in the chaise, just as we were entering the town, Mrs. B. who avails herself of her situation to long for every thing she sees, happened, rather unluckily, to espy some fine cherries against the garden wall of a house of some appearance. Oh, Mama! she exclaimed, what delightful cherries! I have not tasted one this year—what would I give for only a dozen! So saying, she was desperately clapping her hand to her face; but her mother hastily catching hold of it, prevented the fatal deed. Consider what you are about, daughter, you shall have some of the cherries if they are to be had; but do not mark the child in sight! She then drove briskly on, Mrs. Bertram sighing profoundly, and saying she was sure she should not be able to eat a bit of dinner.

We were soon at Mr. Parkitt's, where the remainder of the party were already arrived. The good lady of the house received

ceived us with much cordiality, and pressed us to partake of some refreshments, which were spread in profusion on the side-board. Most of us complied very readily; but Mrs. Bertram, throwing herself into a chair, as if she meant to faint, declared she should eat nothing all day. This determination produced a thousand anxious inquiries, and the history of the beautiful cherries. Mrs. Peterson described the house where they had been seen, and desired Mrs. Parkitt would send to beg some. The latter replied, that she was extremely sorry, but it was impossible for her to take such a liberty—that the family were strangers to her, and had the character of being very particular people—that she knew no one who had the slightest connection with them—that she would send and buy some cherries; she had seen very good ones in the town.

Mrs.

Mrs. Bertram, at this answer, grew still more languid, and begged a glass of water. Harriet ran to fetch one--her sister flew to her aid with salts and essences; while Mrs. Peterson, catching up a basket of very ample dimensions, for it was to take home provision from M—, set off, unperceived, in the bustle. Mrs. Bertram having had a fit of hystericks that lasted above an hour, in spite of all our endeavours to recover her; and having swallowed a decent quantity of hartshorn, sal volatile, asafoetida, &c. at length recovered sufficiently to perceive the absence of her mother. She next missed the basket; "oh!" said she, "I'm sure mama will bring it back filled."—At this thought she brightened up, partook cheerfully of the good fare, and laughed very heartily at the awkward figure she supposed her mother would make upon such an errand. She desired her sister to go and help to bring home

home the basket.—This Miss Peterson refused; till Harriet offered to bear her company: and the young folks set off.

In the mean time Mrs. Parkitt had sent all over the town to satisfy the longing lady; and we were all waiting, with different degrees of impatience, the return of the several messengers. Mrs. Parkitt's succeeded first; they brought in some very tolerable looking cherries, which cost very dear, and were not quite ripe. Mrs. Bertram, however, being unwarily informed that they were not those she had seen, could not be prevailed on to taste them; and was about to treat us with the second part of her hystericks, when she heard her mother's voice upon the stairs—“Where's my Charlotte; tell the child I have got some for her at last.” Mrs. Bertram reviving, ran eagerly to meet her; but had another fit—a fit of disappointment, when she discovered the smallness

ness of the quantity, being little more than a dozen in a basket that would have held a peck: "Is this all, mama?" said she, faintly. She, however, devoured them eagerly, shedding tears all the time. "I wish," said Mrs. Peterson, "somebody may steal all the rest; I promise you, child, I had a hard matter to get these, tho' I told 'em 'twas for my daughter that was big-bellied. First I rings at the gate, and a fine laced fellow of a footman comes and opens it.—I should be glad to speak a word with your mistress, young man, says I—I only wants to beg the favour of a few of her cherries, for my daughter has a mind for some."—The puppy grinned in my face, and said, he believed his lady had a great mind for them herself: he was putting the door to, but I pushed in. I insists upon seeing your mistress, fellow, said I.—Well, says he, she is just going out a riding; you may speak to her as she goes. The carriage came round, and I goes.

goes up to it.—I goes to the window—So, says I, Ma'am, I only wants to beg a few cherries for my daughter, who longs for some. The woman's mad, said a fine lady, pulling up the glass, I should have a fine job to satisfy the longings of all the breeding women in the parish—drive on, Thomas. The carriage went off, and the fine footman behind it. Seeing the coast clear, I ventured to steal towards the garden: I met the gardener—I gave 'em a shilling for a dozen of cherries—and here they are, daughter: a penny a piece—'tis eating money.

Mrs. Bertram laughed immediately at this account—made a very good dinner—and had no more longings all day.

Wednesday 29

Mrs. Bertram told Mr. Ewer yesterday, that she was determined to have a treat from him ; he said, the sooner the better—and named to-day. He left us immediately in order to engage the Larimers upon our account, the Figginses for the rest of the company.

We are just returned from this scheme, which, upon the whole, was a very pleasant one ; although the conversation could take no very interesting turn in so large and mixt a circle, which is always, with me, a subject of secret regret, when with this amiable and well informed man, from whose discourse a mind, properly disposed, can hardly fail to become wiser or better. It is, however, so agreeable to see him in spirits, and every body well pleased,

pleased, that I hope I was far from being the dullest of the set.

Mrs. Bertram was happy, for she was well supplied with strawberries and cream. The young folks gathered the fruit for her, which here flourishes exceedingly.—Mrs. Larimer cooked it, and Mrs. B. ate very heartily.

Harriet did not seem embarrassed.—I thought she watched Miss Larimer a little; but nothing occurred worthy of observation.

Thursday 30.

Harriet was much taken with a lady we met at Mrs. Parkitt's. “What an agreeable woman is that Mrs. Soothly!” she said to me the next day—how sociable, how interesting!”

interesting!" It was but little that gained this encomium; it had only cost her a few caresses to my inexperienced friend, with the tender epithets of love, and dear, at every word; some warm professions of regard, and many of regret, at being obliged to part so soon after their acquaintance had commenced. The rest of the party were not less charmed with this affectionate person; for she had been as free of her blandishments to all. I was the only one not fascinated by this charmer, for I am apt to distrust these easy intimacies, my dear Edward; they augur either lightness or duplicity, qualities I should be sorry to meet with in a friend.

It is certainly very light to bestow one's affection without some previous acquaintance; to profess, without bestowing, is worse; it is insincere. This lady's heart, if we are to believe her in earnest, must, as a French bishop once said of another,
" be

"be à Chœur de Cathédrale où il y a place par tout le monde."

Seriously, those who have a little conscious merit to stamp a value on their affections, are not so prodigal of a coin few are able to repay in kind. Some persons feel more than they express; others express more than they feel; of this last description I take Harriet's new favourite to be: however, a few such observations as these have rather cooled her newly kindled flame, and raised something like distrust in its stead.

Friday, July 1.

We were yesterday at Mr. Grove's.— When I hear some of our pastoral beaux affecting the little delicacies of a *petite maîtresse*,

tresse; such as not enduring such and such smells, not being able to eat such and such things, I feel more offended than perhaps insignificance of the cause can justify; but it is insupportable to me, my dear Edward, to see any man, more particularly such as are really coarse in their manners, aping the most trifling of our sex, in matters wherein they are eminently ridiculous.

'Tis perhaps carrying the opinion to a great length, to add, that I even dislike to see a man with a white hand; and I assure you my love, it is not in compliment to your brown rough paw, that I have adopted this way of thinking. I always had it.

Mr. Peterson is gone post to Bath, in hopes to obtain a new lease of his farm, and have it signed by his landlord before his

his death, which it is said cannot be far off.

Saturday, July 2.

Our round of visits will be completed to-morrow ; already Mrs. Bertram talks of returning ; in vain we sought an engagement for to day, no one would take us in. We have, however, planned a long walk, and I go to join it ; the scheme is more to my taste than any we have lately had.

Sunday 3.

The eldest Miss Figgins has been on a visit to a new married couple, relations of her family, who reside in the neighbourhood of London. In little more than a

month she has seen every thing worthy of observation, not only in the metropolis, but within the circuit of a day or two's journey of it. Her friends had devoted their onset in life to amusement, and their guest had all the benefit of their gay disposition.

It appeared, however, from the young lady's own account, that the jaunting rapidly from place to place, delighted her more than the finest object she had seen in any. At the theatres she admired nothing but the scenes and decorations; at the museums exactly nothing at all, nor much more at the gentlemen's fine seats and parks, of which she had visited a great many. Harriet asked me to day, which I thought preferable—"the state of a person who saw every thing and enjoyed nothing, or that of one having the taste and faculty of enjoyment without the means?"—

" Whence

"Whence this question, my dear?" said I;
"It came into my head," replied she, "on hearing with what apathy Miss Figgins spoke the other day, of all the fine things she had seen, while I and many others, whom such an opportunity would so highly gratify, shall probably never meet with it."

"You are very young," I answered, "to form such hasty conclusions; I shall make use of the same argument to console you under your misfortune, till I find a better, which my poor mother used frequently to address to me; for I assure you, I have little more to boast of on this head than yourself—she herself, had neither health nor fortune to indulge me in rambling; and my rich relations, who were continually making excursions, never thought it worth their while to make me of their parties, but noticed me little more than they do now. "Ah, Sophy, she would say, hadst thou been rich and stupid, thou

wouldst have seen all these things long ago; and cared nothing about them; as it is, my child, thou must be content to read, and hear me tell of them, and with thy turn of mind, believe me, thine is the happier lot; thy enjoyment is greater." However, my dear," continued I, "if Mr. Willars returns with his pockets well lined, it shall go hard but we will have a jaunt together, and see whatever our little island has of fair or wonderful." Harriet is much delighted with the scheme. We please ourselves in settling plans for it. Adieu! We are just going to trace our route on the map.

Monday, July 4.

Yesterday afternoon we all spent at Mr. Figgins's, except Harriet, who was indisposed with a bad head-ach, and would by

no means suffer me to stay at home with her. Our visit went off as usual, nothing occurred worth relating, and I was not surprised, on our return, to find that Harriet had retired to rest. I went gently into her apartment, but as she did not seem to notice it, I forbore to disturb her. This morning she was with me before I was stirring; she seated herself by my bed side, and without uttering a word, burst into tears! Surprised and alarmed, I questioned her tenderly as to the cause of them, but was some time before I could learn it. At length she sobbed out, that she was unworthy of my regard, or even of my compassion; that she had broke her word with me, and forfeited all title to my friendship. "My dear Harriet," I said to her, surmising what must have happened, "be not so harsh to yourself; you have no severity to apprehend from me; I always must and always will love you, let what will have happened. I alone am to blame for going

to an insipid visit, when my poor girl was ill and in want of a friend and companion."

"Indeed, I was ill, my dear friend," said she; "but it was a most unfortunate indisposition. I am a poor weak creature, unfit to be left to my own guidance. Oh! my dear Mrs. Willars, why did I not let you stay with me?"—she hid her face and wept. I gathered at length, my Edward, that this poor child, innocently seeking relief for the pain in her head, and thinking herself quite secure of being alone, had strolled, soon after we left her, to her favourite retreat: she seated herself in the arbour, chirruped to her bull-finck, who immediately obeyed her summons, and, recollecting a former interesting scene, recalled to her by every thing she either saw or heard—she lost the sence of pain.—She protests she had no idea of being surprised by Mr. Ewer, who never comes but very early in the morning; however, it so happened, that having heard of our visit, and concluding

concluding that he should find the coast clear, he availed himself of the opportunity to execute some fresh plan of improvement, with which he meant to surprise us..

Harriet had not long enjoyed her agreeable reverie ere she was interrupted with the appearance of Mr. Ewer, loaded with an enormous basket of flowers. He so little expected a witness of his gallantry and assiduity, and was so taken up with the care of his load, that he entered the arbour without seeing her. Meanwhile Harriet, confused and trembling, shrunk up in the corner, and would have shrunk into the earth, she said, had that been possible.—He started when he discovered her!—“may I believe my eyes, Miss Harriet,” said he—“indeed I thought you absent on a visit, or I had not presumed—“I was not well enough, Sir,” said she, gathering courage from his respect and visible embarrassment, “to accompany the family. I preferred being alone,

and thought myself quite secure." " You are not well," said he tenderly, and setting down his basket, which seemed rather of the heaviest ; " you look rather pale, why are you alone ?" — he had taken off his hat, and wiped the drops as they ran copiously down his forehead. Harriet was not proof against all this ; his apparent sympathy and evident fatigue vanquished her timidity, she could not help requesting him to be seated. " Since you give me leave I shall avail myself of it," said he, " the heat has a little fatigued me, or I should not perfume." A silence of some minutes prevailed, which Mr. Ewer at length broke : starting up, he said, " why should I not avail myself of this opportunity ?" Harriet too attempted to rise, meaning to have made her escape, but trembled so she was obliged to sit down again.

" Before you hurry from me, Madam," said he, " will you permit me to ask if

Mr.

Mr. Deacon is really the happy man report bespeaks him?" Harriet was not slow in answering this question ; she protested with vehemence, that Mr. Deacon was not, nor ever could be, any thing to her. " I am constrained to endure his persecution," said she, " but my consent to be his nothing shall ever extort from me." " You give me life, my Harriet," returned eagerly Mr. Ewer; may I then hope, that at some more seasonable period your heart may be brought to favour the pretensions of the faithfulest of men?" — He was now at her feet, and Harriet speechless and motionless durst not even raise her eyes — " Speak, my beloved Harriet," continued he, " give me but a ray of hope, that if I am happy enough to obtain the sanction of your friends, I may one day aspire at yours?" Harriet, highly gratified by this respectful and proper reference, now ventured to raise her eyes, and smiled through her tears — Oh ! Mrs.

Willars," said she, " how I blush to tell you ; I knew not what to do with my head, nor where to hide my face, it somehow sunk upon his bosom, but that indeed was all :—he insisted on my promise to be his, which I believe I gave him. What hurts me most is, that I forgot to say, provided my friends gave their consent ; yet sure it was implied, and he will scorn to take advantage of the omission. I know not how the time slipt away afterwards ; I could not tear myself from the spot :—he entertained me with plans of domestic œconomy for our future life ; said his first care should be to settle near you ; and drew so charming a picture of the happiness within the reach of our limited means, that he almost made me detest the thoughts of ever exceeding them. I told him so, and he appeared, if possible, more delighted, than with all that had past before. It never once occurred to me to question him about Miss Laramer ; yet I cannot distrust him—conviction

tion dwells upon his tongue—every word bears the stamp of sincerity and honour!"

Though I am convinced, my dear Edward, that this unlucky meeting on both sides was accidental, I could by no means approve it; yet I feared to animadvert too severely. I contented myself with recommending to her to speak to her friends without delay, as it would be highly improper, after what had past, to defer it at all. "May not I propose it to him?" said she, "or will you for me? I shall never have the courage." To this I agreed, and we only wait Mr. Peterson's return, which is daily expected. I fear a direct refusal, and that Mr. Ewer will be forbidden the house. Poor Harriet's wishes deceive her—I tremble to think of the cruel stroke that awaits her!"

Tuesday,

Tuesday, July 5.

The newly declared lover did not fail yesterday to come with inquiries after his mistress's health; his attentions this time, were pointed enough to put Mr. Peterson quite out of humour.

This circumstance has damped Harriet's spirits; but it only occurred to her after Mr. Ewer was gone; she was far too happy while he stayed to attend to any thing unpleasant. I took an opportunity to represent to him the impropriety of continuing to address Miss Harriet, unknown to her friends: he allowed the force of my reasoning, and promised to apply to Mr. Peterson immediately upon his return. "If I have deferred it, Madam," said he, "it was owing to circumstances which one day will be fully explained: thus much however I must confess to you, whose good opinion I so highly value, I feared the impropriety.

priety of an address under my peculiar circumstances. I wished too to engage Miss Harriet's inclinations on my side, before I entered into explanations with her friends. Mr. Deacon's address—an unexpected opportunity—the fear of losing what I so highly prize—altogether, have hurried me from my purpose. I hope, however, to prevail to obtain the consent of her family, and when my year of mourning is up, or sooner, if that may be, to call your fair friend irrevocably mine."

Wednesday, July 7.

Mr. Peterson returned yesterday without his errand ; he found Mr. Allenden in a state of insensibility, and left him with the conviction that the news of his demise must speedily follow. This disappointment has cast a gloom over all the family, and I have

have been the first to advise Mr. Ewer not to choose so unfavourable a moment to propose his suit.

Thursday 8.

Harriet, anxious to repair her late indiscretion, scarce ever quits my side. Mr. Ewer never omits a day in coming to see her ; but his entreating eye cannot obtain a particular interview, however he seems to desire it. He told me this morning that such constraint was insupportable, and that he should certainly take the earliest opportunity of speaking to Mr. Peterson. Harriet trembles at the idea ! she sees in the cold reception he meets with from the family, how little she has to hope.

Monday

Monday 12.

I have been so engaged in endeavouring to comfort my heart-broken friend, that I have not had a moment for my Edward and myself. You and I, my love, who have been, who are, such stricken deer, know full well how to compassionate the early sorrows of a virgin heart.

Mr. Ewer, determined to know his doom, sent on Friday morning, to apprise Mr. Peterson, that he should come in the evening on business, and requested that he would be at home. Though his late assiduities might have sufficiently explained what the busines was likely to be, every one affected ignorance and surprise. The conscious Harriet kept her room all day, suffering the most tormenting apprehensions. I diverted her as well as I could, yet dared not encourage her to hope, while I almost despised myself.

At length the expected evening came, and, punctual to his hour, the faithful lover, Deacon, who I really believe had been sent for, arrived almost at the same instant. I was sitting with Harriet in my room, and saw Mr. Ewer and her uncle enter the garden. Harriet flew from the window to the opposite side of the room; I kept my post, whence I could observe them, and saw the lover pleading his cause with energy and warmth, and Mr. Peterson appearing to attend to him with full of impatience; as they past under my window I heard him say, "Sir, my niece is engaged, I have given my word to a neighbour, if she marries a stranger, she shall never have my consent." To Mr. Ewer's reasons and explanations I distinctly heard this answer, as Mr. P. turned from him at the garden gate.—"Mayhap 'tis as you say, but if that be what you comes for here, your room will be more agreeable for the future than your company." Mr. Ewer took

took several turns in the garden, with folded arms, and much apparent agitation.

Harriet, who, notwithstanding her distance, had heard enough to guess at the whole, sat like the statue of Grief, and was insensible to my arguments and caresses. Miss Peterson was sent to call us to tea; I requested, and obtained that Sally might be permitted to serve us to our room. Here we remained all the evening, with at least the satisfaction of weeping un molested.

The next day, the trembling Harriet was summoned to her aunt; who enquired in high wrath, if she was privy to the fine offer that had been made her? "a pretty match, truly," said she, "a man without home, or trade or profession, whom nobody knows;—pray, what was your fine scheme, Miss; to carry a pack about the country? If your uncle would be ruled by

by me, you should be married to Deacon to-morrow, as the only way to save you from ruin." Harriet answered only with tears, which have flowed, and continued to flow almost ever since. One cause of them is, I doubt, the total silence of her lover, who has neither written to her, nor attempted to see her since ; this apparent neglect robs her of every consolation.

Tuesday 13.

Mrs Peterson informed me this morning, that Mr. Ewer left his lodgings on Saturday, and has not since been heard of. I was deliberating whether or not it was best to impart this intelligence to Harriet, when the rest of the family, at dinner, spared any farther reflection on the subject, by all opening at once to inform her, that Mr. Ewer was gone off again to bury another.

another wife. "He may go where he will to bury or to marry wives," said Mr. Peterson, "but no adventurer from foreign parts shall ever have a niece of mine, I promise 'em.

Sally tells me that Mr. Ewer was not invited to sit down after he had walked with her master in the garden on Friday; and that Deacon, and the rest of the family, set up a rude laugh as he past through the hall, as if on purpose to affront him.

Harriet is less shocked at Mr. Ewer's absenting himself, just at this time, than I expected, as it accounts for his apparent neglect of her, in a manner different from unkindness.

Wednesday 14.

The offer made to Harriet, and her uncle's rejection of it, are no secret; all the village

village have it, and come by turns with inquisitive eyes to see how she takes it ; she flies to her grove or me for refuge. On account of these visits Deacon seems to discontinue his, which is some relief to her.

I go to Mrs. Larimer's alone, for Harriet is forbid the acquaintance ; this is a severe mortification to both. Mrs. L. is ignorant what is become of her friend ; he called on her the evening of his repulse, and related it to her ; he was in much agitation, she says, regretted extremely that he had neither been able to see Harriet nor me ; requested her to assure us of his utmost respect and devotion, but said not one word of any projected journey.

Thursday 15.

I avoid visiting with the family, in order to escape hearing the ill-natured observations

tions with which the village rings ; the precaution, however, is not of much avail ; they are constantly brought home to me, nor can I ward them off even from Harriet. All the family take an invidious pleasure in repeating and dwelling upon every report that is lessening to Mr. Ewer, and mortifying to his friends.

Poor Miss Larimer came to me all in tears this morning, complaining of the cruel observations they are constraining her to hear on the subject of their best friend. "Why will he expose himself to them? Madam," said she, "why will he thus throw over his conduct such a veil of mystery, as exposes it to the attacks of his enemies, and leaves his friends without an argument in his defence?" Harriet is melancholy, but calm and tranquil; she seems indifferent to every thing that is said, and to have made up her mind to her lot with the resignation of despair. The grove is her asylum against all her

her pains! there I am sure to find her whenever she is missing; and there she pretends that sadness is enjoyment, and finds "a luxury in tears."

I stole gently upon her retirement the other day, and overheard the following soliloquy, in prose and verse. "Yes, my ever dear Ewer, thy kind purpose is answered: thy poor forlorn Harriet here finds relief in all her sorrows. My tears shall wet the hallowed spot late watered from thy brow.—Oh, wherever thou art, sure thy spirit lingers here! Yes, I feel it present—it breathes in every flower, it sighs in every gale—it bears witness to my unshaken attachment; it hears my vow to be thine alone: it receives my sighs.—All the labours of thy kind hand speak its presence: it watches over and protects me.

Yes, my beloved, thou art here,
Thy kind intent is crown'd,
And sweetens ev'ry bitter tear,
That wets this hallow'd ground.

Thy gentle spirit here each hour,
Shall o'er my griefs prevail;
It breathes in ev'ry fragrant flow'r,
It sighs in ev'ry gale.

It hears the fond, the faithful oath,
In many a plaintive moan,
That Harriet's heart, and plighted troth,
Is thine, and thine alone.

Methinks, in safety, here I roam
Secure from ev'ry ill;
Whilst here thy spirit has its home,
And guides and guards me still.

I walked back a little after I had over-heard her, that she might not suspect me; but soon returned, making a little noise: for, however delightful these solitary ram-

bles may be, I hold it to be, both prudent and friendly, sometimes to interrupt them.

I think of Dr. Johnson's assertion, that dwelling too much on a cherished idea, is frequently the cause of madness; and tho' Harriet's temper is too gentle, and her passions of too soft a kind to cause much alarm on that head, yet there is no harm in precaution.

Oh! that you were here, my love! I should have but little fears on this dear girl's account; could you but share my concern for her!

Friday 16.

The tide of village tattle is turned into another channel, by intelligence which arrived

arrived at the great house yesterday of the death of its master; this event, however expected, is not the more agreeable. It is surprising that it was not known sooner, as it happened last week; however, as there are only servants at the mansion-house, probably it was not judged necessary to apprise them of it, till they received orders, at the same time, to prepare for the arrival of their new Lord.— We are all prejudiced against him by anticipation.

Mrs. Peterson says, he is in a great hurry to clapper claw; her husband is always lag-fast: he might have had his lease signed had he been like other people; now there is no chance.

Saturday 17.

Mr. Peterson returning from M—, has just brought me the following letter, which appears, from the date, to have lain at the post-office there some days—It is from the lost sheep, as you will soon see—He has also inclosed another for Harriet.

TO MRS. WILLARS.

July 10.

Be assured, dearest Madam, of my highest respect and esteem; and do not think it a breach of either, that I thus presume to make you the vehicle of a clandestine correspondence. — Let the necessity of the measure be its excuse, and my promise that it shall be the last, as it is the first time. I found a letter, on my return home, the day of my unsuccessful appeal to Mr. Peterson, which obliged me to set off

off post, for the business would admit of no delay.

In the hurry and vexation of the moment, I could not collect enough presence of mind to hit upon any expedient to have a letter conveyed to your fair friend, with any probable chance of its reaching her. I have this moment, Madam, thought of inclosing it to you. Mrs. Willars, I persuade myself, with her wonted benevolence, will not only be my messenger, but my advocate. She will support my gentle Harriet's timid spirit; and urge her not to give me up to my ill fate, till at least I have made another effort to subdue Mr. Peterson's prejudice. This attempt I am resolved upon; and the instant my affairs permit me, I shall present myself once more at Southlands; when, if my Harriet will but exert a little resolution, we may yet be happy, and all her friends consenting.

I leave you to imagine the delight and perturbation of Harriet at this so agreeable surprise. She read a few lines—flew from her chair—read them over again; and, I am convinced, had done so repeatedly before she well understood the contents of her letter. I at length obtained a sight of it; it was as follows:

TO MISS H. PETERSON.

Constrained to fly you, my dearest Harriet—for still I will call you mine—at the moment when a separation is so peculiarly cruel.—Think what I suffer, both from your anxiety and my own! What a wretch must I appear to you! flying, like a criminal, without leaving a word of justification or apology. Yet sure I have an advocate with you, who will not suffer me to be condemned unheard. Yet a few days, and every doubt shall be done away, I trust, to our mutual satisfaction. Till then

then think of me with indulgence: yes, think of me, my Harriet, and do not give me up. Still I hope to prevail upon your family; I cannot give up that hope, however unfounded it may appear.

I shall endeavour to bring with me some friends of character, who know me well; and will be unquestionable vouchers for the propriety of my conduct and connections. Folwing has promised to accompany me. This I always meant to obtain of him, in due time: till now I ever feared, however I might desire, that time advanced. My recent loss of an unhappy woman, might shock your delicacy. Would not my Harriet be disgusted to see a six months widower at her feet? A greater fear at length prevailed over this, the fear of losing you. I was daily apprised of your approaching nuptials.

"Who loves must fear—and sure who love like me
Must greatly fear———?

Prudence gave up, and I declared myself, perhaps, a little prematurely; yet bear up a little, my beloved, and all may be well. I write in haste—the post is setting out. Forgive me all the uneasiness I cause you; and be assured it shall be the study of my whole life to make atonement."

At supper time I had a great many cross questions to answer relative to my letter: Was it from Mr. Willars? No. It was double? Yes. Mayhap from some friend? Yes. It cost a great deal of money? that is money I never think much. Luckily no one seemed to suspect the writer; yet Harriet's countenance might have excited suspicion in more accurate observers.

Sunday,

Sunday, 18.

The bloom of animating hope and soft serenity enlivens the late fallen countenance of my young friend.—She treads in air; and I do most sincerely partake her happiness. Nor can I prevail upon myself to damp it, by putting her in mind that her prospects are not at all mended, with respect to prevailing upon her friends, who seem more prejudiced than ever against Mr. Ewer; and never speak of him but in terms of contempt or dislike. She bears the taunts frequently addressed to her, on his sudden disappearance, without emotion, convinced that his return will effectually silence them; and pleasing herself with the surprise that it will cause.

Mr. Deacon appears to have decidedly taken his leave: this is another consolation; but, I believe, the highest of all is

the assurance she feels of the unabated perseverance and constant devotion of her lover.

Monday 19.

Miss Larimer has just left me. She came in great spirits to inform me, that her mother had received a letter from Mr. Ewer, the contents of which gave her the highest satisfaction. He assures her of his regard, his health, and safety; and promises a speedy return. I flew to you the first, said this good-hearted young woman, with the welcome news; but I shall tell it to every one I meet. I am going next to his lodgings, in case he has not sent any word there.

I never saw poor Miss Larimer so elated; she seemed, if that were possible, to be better

better pleased than even Harriet, or at least the contrast from her usual *penserofo*, is more striking.

"As I was accompanying her out I met Mrs. Peterson: "We have heard from Mr. Ewer, Madam," said Miss Larimer; "he desires his best respects to your family, and says he shall soon return."— "We desires none of his respects, Ma'am," said Mrs. P. "and still less his rerurn.— I suppose there is something for Miss Harriet too; but I desires"—a look of mine checked her from going on; and she went off muttering the conclusion of the sentence to herself.

Miss Larimer, extremely shocked, was thus tumbled in an instant from her late elevation. I made the best apology I could devise; and promised to spend a long afternoon with her to-morrow.

Tuesday 20.

I am going, my Edward, to fulfil the promise I yesterday made to Miss Larimer; but I go alone, Harriet not daring to accompany me even a part of the way:—She desires that Sappho may be her substitute, assuring me that she feels no repugnance to be represented by a dog; for sure, she says, 'tis a good symbol of a friend; and one with its good qualities would be inestimable. I was unwilling to deprive her of this faithful entertaining little animal, that has a thousand frolics to amuse us when we are out of spirits: but, she says, she shall take a stroll round the grove, where neither Sappho, nor any absent friend, shall be forgotten.

I set sail then, with a fine fresh gale, I assure you, for the season—Till to-morrow, adieu my Edward!

By

" By ev'ry wind that blows this way,
" Send me at least a sigh or two:
" Such, and so many I'll repay,
" As shall themselves make winds to fly to you."

Wednesday 21.

Harriet's birthday

I had the pleasure of finding my friends both in good spirits; and the little mortification Miss Larimer had sustained the other day quite overcome. The best of every thing the house afforded was set out for my regale. Mrs. Larimer herself had made the tea-cakes; and they had sent two miles for cream. The last cherries were stript from their only tree; and nothing omitted that the most attentive kindness could suggest to bid me welcome. The absence of Harriet was, nevertheless, a little damp upon our satisfaction; these poor ladies, tremblingly alive to every mark of slight

flight or contumely, severely feel that of having forbid her their house.

I endeavoured to console them with assurances of her regret, and unshaken and unalienable esteem. We spent some very delightful hours in chat and work; and Miss Larimer returned with me about half way. It was near nine o'clock when I arrived; and not finding Harriet in the house, I posted away, without further inquiry, to the grove, satisfied that I should meet her there. Having searched it all over without success, I was returning to the house; when Sappho, who had followed me, began barking and running backward, as if she saw something to alarm her. I turned round and discovered, as far off as I could see, the figure of a man, whose face appeared to me to be black. Excessively surprised

surprised at such an apparition in this lone place, and at such an hour, I did not venture a second look; but conceiving that it must be a person disguised for some bad purpose, I fled with the utmost precipitation; and neither stopt nor lookt till I reached the house.

Harriet, who had been with her cousin to Miss Grove's, was just returned; she was alarmed at the agitation in which she saw me, and eagerly inquired the cause, which I have, however, explained to none but her; for upon reflection I am rather ashamed of it, and not perfectly convinced whether the vision was real or imaginary. However, it will frighten us both from venturing to the Grove after dusk, till we are a little better satisfied as to the truth; and that will be a great denial.

Thursday

Thursday 22.

Harriet has just been giving me the history of her visit to Miss Grove's.

I was hardly gone before her cousin proposed it to her.—The scheme was not at all what she liked; but, with her usual good-nature, she gave up her inclination to her cousins, and consented to go.—Miss Peterson made herself very smart, and they set off. Miss Grove was alone, and received them very coldly. After a quarter of an hour's stay, Harriet made a sign to her cousin to return, (for she understood there was a large company of men who had dined with Mr. Grove, and were still at table,) but Miss Peterson was immovable; and, in spite of the little encouragement she received from the lady of the house, waited composedly the arrival of the tea things.

Miss

Miss Grove now invited her to help to pour out the tea. " You are a famous hand," said she; " don't you remember how you let the water run all over you at Mrs. Bennett's, when my brother was flirting with the little Londoner?"

Miss Peterson accepted the invitation, without noticing the observation; and placed herself, with great willingness, at the tea-table. The gentlemen had no notice sent them; which, after it had been repeated for the third time, they at length obeyed, entering the tea-room as unceremoniously as if it had been a tavern; indeed, they were most of them in no condition to study propriety. All the gentlemen, of the neighbourhood were of the party, several strangers from the town; and, above all, Mr. Deacon. This last was rather more elevated than any of his companions. He no sooner espied Harriet, than he reeled towards her, proposing

posing to kiss and be friends. She contrived to elude his freedom ; but to keep him at a distance from her, was not so easy a point.

Mr. J. Grove took post by Miss Petersen—insisted upon helping her to make tea—stared her full in the face—took her round the waist ; and behaved with such freedom, as diverted his sister and the rest of the company exceedingly ; and though it confused the lady, did not seem to displease her. Harriet, mortified both for herself and her cousin, suffered inexpres-sibly.

The elder Grove inquired of her after her runaway ; and giving vent to his spleen, said the most unfounded and injurious things of Mr. Ewer. His sister observed, that Miss Harriet had reason to bless her stars that she was not married to him before he ran away. "Married to him!" said

said Deacon, "No Miss, I hope you had no thoughts of that neither, when you know I would have had you myself: no occasion for that neither." Harriet heard all this in silence; to escape was impossible; till her cousin had finished the task she had undertaken: there was no remedy but patience. As for Miss Grove, she seemed highly to enjoy her distress, which she took care to make as complete and as conspicuous as possible.

At length the ceremony of tea drinking was over, not however without accidents: One of the Figginses broke a cup; and Deacon turned his dish of coffee, well creamed, all over the carpet. These were matters that Miss Grove did not seem to think so diverting—her fair countenance clouded in a moment; but a well turned compliment from one of the strangers, who was the least disguised, and a clean mop, restored her to serenity.

The

The card tables were placed, and Harriet prevailed to leave this disgusting scene, which her cousin seemed to do with reluctance. "I cannot think, Ma'am," says Harriet, who does not suspect her partiality, "how my cousin could like to stay." Mr. and Mrs. Peterson were delighted to hear from their daughter, that Mr. Deacon seemed disposed to return to his colours; they were at some pains to assure their niece that he is a very sober man, notwithstanding the plight in which he had been seen.

I believe, indeed, my Edward, that it may often happen to the soberest man in company, to be the first overcome at a drinking bout; yet, with regard to this sweet suitor of Harriet's, from all I can gather, he is one of those sober people, who never drink at their own expence, nor ever miss an opportunity, at that of others; his mistress consoles herself with the hope, that

that his love-fit is gone off with his drunken one, as he has not been here since.

Saturday 24.

I was prevented yesterday from holding my usual chit-chat with my Edward, and to be deprived of this solace in his absence, is always a great mortification to me. I shall, however, make up for it to day. I have a long (and to you and I, who must look upon ourselves as parties concerned) an interesting story to tell. We were all seated together at work in the parlour, on Thursday afternoon, when Sally entered and announced Mr. Ewer—the utmost confusion ensued! the work dropt from Harriet's hand, and Mrs. Peterson rising, said, very loud, "why did not you tell him your master was gone out?" "I did, Ma'am," said Sally, "and he asked for you and the ladies."

ladies.' 'Tell him we are all gone out,' said she, raising her voice still higher. Sally returned with the message, which he could not avoid hearing. "Sir, my mistress says she is not at home," stammered out Sally. "I am sorry she will not see me," said Mr. Ewer; "I have a friend with me, who would speak to Mr. Peterson; when will he be at home?" "I don't know, Sir," said Sally. "Will not Mrs. Willars condescend to see me?" Sally was returning with the message, but I prevented her, and went to him at the door. I found a gentle-looking man with him, likewise in mourning, whom he introduced to me as his friend Folwing. I ventured to invite them into the best parlour. "Will Mrs. Willars forgive me?" said Mr. Ewer, "if my first enquiries are after her fair friend?" I satisfied him that she was well. "Did you receive my letter?" resumed he, "and do you forgive the liberty of writing it?" To this, I also answered in the affirmative.

"And does my Harriet," said he, falteringly, "think of me with indulgence?" As I did not answer, he continued; "Does she think of me at all?" I told him that it was not a fair question:—"you have explanations to make, Sir; before you have a right to require any." "Yes, Madam," he replied, "and it is for that purpose I now wait upon Mr. Peterson, and bring with me, this gentleman as a voucher: he is well known in the next county of H—, where his word never yet was called in question; he has known me many years, and will, I am sure, be my bondsman to any amount." Mr. Folwing smiling, said, "he was quite diverted at the idea of his friend requiring any; it proved indeed, he was not known." Since I could not get out of it,
"I thought to have apprised you of this visit, Madam," said Mr. Ewer; "and for that purpose sent Mr. Folwing's servant forward with a letter last Tuesday; he is a very intelligent fellow, though a black, and

and not choosing that he should appear at the house, I had described your favourite retreat to him with such exactness, that he found his way to it without difficulty—he even saw you, but it seems his appearance caused you some alarm ; for you fled with such precipitation that he durst not venture to follow, and returned without having executed his commission.”

I could not help laughing at this explanation of my fright, which you find, however, was not imaginary. Indeed, my dear Edward, I am convinced that I have often mistaken reality for imagination, but never yet imagination for reality.

While our conversation lasted, I heard Mr. Peterson come in, and apprised Mr. Ewer of it. “Would you be so very good,” said he, “as to endeavour to prevail upon him to come here, and speak with me?” I readily undertook the commission.

mission. I found him just going out, having heard who was in the house. "Mr. Peterson," said I, "here are two gentlemen waiting to speak with you; they know you are at home, and—" "I am sorry," said he, interrupting me, "that it does not suit; I have business myself; our new landlord is arrived, and I must go and see him." I was constrained to return with my ill-success. Mr. Ewer was less shocked at this rudeness than I expected; he said "he was determined to explain his situation to Mr. Peterson, and for that purpose *would* see him once more."—"Folwing," said he, "you know the gentleman who is come to this estate, if you can interest him for me, it may do much." Mr. Folwing smiling, proposed, since he was arrived, to introduce him immediately; and with this new scheme, which seemed to raise Mr. Ewer's spirits very much, they took leave and set off.

When I returned to the family, I found Harriet hanging pensively over her work, which I do not think she had advanced during my absence; she raised her eyes at my approach, but neither spoke nor moved. "I am sorry," said I, "that Mr. Peterson would neither see Mr. Ewer, nor the friend he brought with him, who is a gentleman of large estate in —shire; however, they are gone together to Mr. Allenden, who I find is arrived, and to whom Mr. Folwing is well known, to endeavour to obtain an audience through him." Mrs. Peterson replied, "that her husband was likewise gone to Mr. Allenden; that it was to be hoped his tenants would have as much credit with him as strangers, and that *her* Mr. Peterson, had people enough to speak for ~~him~~." "I don't think, Madam," said I, "that Mr. Peterson will have any body to speak against him; the gentleman had certainly no such intention." Our tea went off rather sullenly. Harriet, pale and trembling,

trembling, swallowed a dish with great difficulty ; and to complete her distress, Deacon, who had not been here this fortnight, just then arrived. Dull as he is, he could not but be struck with the pale and altered looks of his mistress. “ Why how now, Miss Harriet,” said he, “ you looks as if you could not help it ; I assure you, if I have stayed away so long, it was not out of unkindness like, so you need not take on about that.” Harriet turned from him with disgust, but gave him no answer. Her aunt, however, endeavoured to make him amends by the most cordial welcome, and by encouraging the modest idea, that his absenting himself had really affected her niece with the fear of being forsaken. A thunder-shower, which fell soon after, deprived us of the relief of a walk : in the mean time, Mrs. Peterson, suddenly inspired with a bright thought, made a sign to her daughter to follow her out of the room, and then sent word that she desired to

speak with me. I followed to the other parlour, and was informed with a fly wink, that she thought it proper to leave the young people to explain themselves.

I am called—the rest to-morrow.

Thursday 25.

Harriet had enjoyed her agreeable tete-à-tete a full half hour, during which, as she informs me, her admirer delivered himself with great efforts of three sentences, which she answered in monosyllables : he first observed that it rained, then enquired if she was afraid of thunder, and lastly, marvelled at Mrs. Peterson's staying so long : he appeared as uneasy as his mistress, and at length made his escape, to the great relief of both.

Mr.

Mr. Thomas Peterson met him at the door, and prevailed upon him to return ; he then set up such a shouting and hallooing as presently assembled us altogether in the common parlour to learn the cause ; he began scraping and bowing, as low as his utter disuse would give him leave, with an air of mock respect to Harriet, which she, little disposed to relish, was leaving the room to avoid. “ Nay, my pretty cousin,” said he, taking her hands, “ I have rare news for you, and you must stop to hear it.” She was constrained to return to her seat. “ Now, mother,” continued Mr. Thomas, you that love news, what will you give for some ? ” “ Your cow has calved I suppose,” said his mother. “ No,” said he, “ that is not the thing at all ; now I’ll set all you wimen volk to guesf all night, and you’ll never guesf right ; no, nor Mrs. Willars neither, for all she’s so cute.” I declined the attempt, except he would condescend to enlighten us with a

few hints. "Except I tell you all," said he, "no then you'd be as cunning as I; but come sister Anne, do set thy wits at work a bit, thee does not want wit sometimes; come riddle me riddle me rea, do gueſſ a bit." His sister told him that he was a blockhead, that every body could gueſſ, and that, indeed, she should not trouble herself about his nonsense. Mrs. Peterson, however, who does not want for female curioſity, desired him to explain himself.

"Why then, mother," said he, "you must know, in the first and foremost place, that our new landlord is come;— "is that your news, indeed?" said his sister, "who knows but that—" "Stop a bit Miss," continued he, "or I'll not tell a word more: so as soon as I know'd it, for the bells were set a ringing, and I goes to John Sexton to know what it was about; so says he, 'tis because the squire's come; so with that I goes home to wife, to tell she to get me a clean

clean shirt, and to scratch out my hair a bit, and then I sets off to the great house to see the squire, and to give him joy of his brother's death, and to speak about neighbour Wilkin's little bargain, which I shoud like to have as well as another : zo as zoon as I comed, I zaw some strange people about, and I axed for the squire, zo they told me as how as he was gone out ; but they were main civil, and axed me to have some beer ; zo with that just as I was taking a drink, who should come in but feyther and Grove, and Figgins and Bennett, and ever so many more : zo we all zet down to drink, and bye-and-bye in comes a footman, and desires us to walk in, zo with that in we walks, and who should be there in the great parlour, along with the squire, as great as could be, but Harriet's Mr. Ewer ! zo he stared, and we stared ; and Figgins goes up to the squire, and zo says he, your honour's welcome to Southlands, we are your tenants come to give you joy ;—zo with that the

squire, as we thought him, drew back, and zo says he, you are mistaken, Sir, you are to address yourselves to that gentleman: that is Mr. Ewer, Mr. Allenden's half brother, and heir to his estate—he is your landlord, and not I.”—At this period of Mr. Thomas's eloquent narration, we all interrupted him with different exclamations of surprise. Harriet alone was silent, not appearing to believe her ears. Mrs. Peterson said, “the boy is mad—what is he cramming us with now.” For my part, I was ready to exclaim in the words of the song,

“ Repeat, repeat, repeat the strain,
“ Tell it o'er and o'er again !”

Yet I doubted still the truth of an event so happy and so unforeseen. Mr. Thomas, however, soon convinced us, that it was literally a matter of fact. He thus continued,—“ Your honour is pleased to be merry, zays Figgins ; zays he, we all knows

Mr.

Mr. Ewer well enough.” “ I’m not at all disposed to be merry, says he, that we took for the squire;—and zure enough he looked cursed glum;—give me leave to tell you, that you don’t know Mr. Ewer at all; when you do know him, you will honour and esteem him as he deserves, as your landlord; he is entitled to your respect, even though his merit was much less than I have long known it to be.” “ A truce, Folwing,— (ay, Folwing was the name), said our squire,—if these gentlemen will but do me justice, I dare engage they shall always find me ready to be just to them. I have lived some time in the midst of them, and am acquainted both with them and my affairs.” Fyther would have slunk into an auger hole at all this, and to be sure we all look’d cursed small; for here has our landlord been living among us, looking all about him for this twelvemonth, overhawling all his estate, watching his tenants, and the duce and all, and we have used

him like a dog, that's for fartin ; howfomed-
ever, one begun to ax pardon, and 'tother
begun to ax pardon, for not knowing him
like ; as for fyther, I never saw him zo cut
up ; he had not a word to throw at a dog.''

" Well, but Tom," said Mrs. Peterson,
" your father had no need to be frought,
that I know for; if Mr. Ewer's our squire,
'tis quite a different thing, we were not con-
jurors to know that ; if he's a mind for our
Harriet, why, Mr. Deacon must needs think
we can't refuse the squire. You see, Mr.
Deacon, the case is altered quite." The
swain hung his head in speechless amaze-
ment.

Poor Harriet, who had long struggled
with her emotions, now became so ex-
tremely pale, that her kind aunt, vastly
interested for her on a sudden, desired Miss
Peterson to lead her into the air. You may
be sure I shared this office; we each took
an arm, and conducted her into the garden,

where she speedily recovered. "It never can be true, Mrs. Willars," said she, "as soon as she could speak:—for why should Mr. Ewer conceal his real situation? Ah! no, it never can be true, or, if it were, what is it to me? Ill-treated by my friends, only half encouraged by me, scorned by persons so much beneath him;—oh! he will despise us in his turn." Her cousin, who has not a spark of envy in her composition, said all she could to convince her of the truth of her brother's relation, and of the consequence it was likely to be of to her. "Recollect, my dear cousin," said she, "that Mr. Ewer was here this very afternoon." "Yes," said Harriet, "and how was he received?" I now related to her what had passed between him and me, his anxious inquiries after her, and his declared resolution to persist in his suit. "He certainly meant to enjoy your surprise, my dear," continued I, "and reward your disinterested affection, which must likewise

be a great enjoyment to such a mind as his." Harriet cheered up at this, protesting, I am sure with truth, that his rank and fortune had no other charms with her, than as it made his proposals agreeable to her friends. Mrs. Peterson now became extremely anxious about her niece, and came herself with inquiries after her health.

We all returned to the house, and were soon joined by Mr. Peterson himself, who, forgetting his late humiliation, returned in high spirits and good humour, which he had increased on his way home, for the Plough is always in his road, and he had called there to drink to the health of his new landlord, and to astonish the guests with the news of who he was, even before he had related it to his own family; however, he concluded his son's narration, which Harriet's indisposition had interrupted.— "I was trying to get off, wife," said he; "but just as I was at the door, the squire took

took me by the hand—vast kind indeed! You and I have busines together, Mr. Peterson, said he, and I hope you will be at home to-morrow at ten o'clock; so I zed, to be sure I was his servant at command—so he rang the bell and ordered wine, and made us all drink his health, and drank to us as hearty as could be, and seemed to bear no grutch at all; more of the neighbours came in, and I left ever so many of them drinking down their surprise as fast as ever they could. Well, but what says our little Harriet? 'tis rare news for her, a fly puss; what! and so she'll be leady of the great house at last: Master Deacon, I'm sorry for you, but you know we can't refuse the squire; he might turn me out of the farm, for I han't got the lease signed; can't refuse the squire, Mr. Deacon." Mr. Deacon had nothing to answer to such solid argument, but prudently took his leave.

Monday 26.

Between joy and anxiety, two inmates almost equally restless, Harriet could not close her eyes all night ; she rose with the sun, and hastened to her beloved retreat, now more than ever endeared to her, as the free-will offering of such a generous and disinterested love. Here she spent the hours, contemplating with the tenderest interest and delight, every shrub and every flower, that had been planted and raised by a hand so deservedly dear. Here I found her, about seven o'clock, occupied with her bull-finches, every innocent object having had its turn. "Well my dear," said I, "does all this fairy scene inspire no little poet's fancy?" "Ah, no indeed," answered she, "my head is far too unsettled to aim at composition ; but why should you suspect me of being capable of such a thing?" "Because I know you to be so, my dear Harriet, and that I have

have proofs of it ; I have saved a few copies from the flames, which I think it will give Mr. Ewer great pleasure to see.” “Ah ! my dear friend,” cried she eagerly, “what do you mean ? I rely upon your indulgence, and sure you would not expose me!” “I would not pain you, you may be sure,” said I, “what I have contrived to be possesst of, shall never appear till you yourself allow it.”

We stayed here till near the hour of breakfast, when we returned and found the family assembled, and in high good humour. Mrs. Peterson chid Harriet for having neglected her toilet : the last made believe to breakfast, and then hastened with a beating heart to repair her neglect, to arrange her auburn locks under a hand-kerchief, and put on a clean white muslin gown ; she had hardly done, when Mr. Ewer arrived ; all the family ran to meet him, outvying each other in compliments and

and excuses : you may believe all difficulties were at an end, and that he was speedily left with the trembling Harriet.

As soon as they were alone, he seized her hands and threw himself at her feet.— “ Can you forgive me, my dear, my angelic Harriet,” said he, “ for having practised upon you an innocent deceit, since it has answered so well ? shall your favour be still my choicest, my dearest distinction ?— oh, with what delight have I watched its gentle progress ; its soft sweet radiance diffused on Ewer, poor unhappy, forlorn and despised ! Say, shall it gild my prosperous hours, as it has soothed my adverse ones ? As to outward circumstances, I am no longer the same ; is my Harriet unaltered with the change ? will she condescend to share my joys, as she has sympathised in my sorrows ?— Harriet’s tears, which fell on his face and hands, were her only answer ; but they were sufficiently expressive and

and intelligible—she smiled through them, and hid her face, as she had done in a former interview; but without remorse or confusion for the act. She soon grew at ease with him, and the conversation became unrestrained. She questioned him as to whatever had appeared mysterious in his conduct, and received the most ingenuous and satisfactory answers.

“ I had several reasons,” said he, “ for choosing this place rather than any to retire to, after the conviction I had received of an unhappy woman’s misconduct. I never had been here; and my brother had been here so little, that I was convinced, both my name and person were utterly unknown; my brother’s affairs were so, too; his extreme negligence excited negligence again, and his heir was thought to be of the same name, but we were alike neither in name nor nature; our inclinations were at variance in every thing, and

he

he would have detected me had it been otherwise, merely as the person who was to possess his estate. As such, far from keeping up any correspondence with me, or giving me the least assistance, when at times I have wanted it, my very name was odious to him; and he was never known to mention it. The parasites who surrounded him never wounded his ears with any thing disagreeable: thus I thought myself secure of remaining here unknown and unsuspected for what I was.

It was natural that, thus circumstanced, I should prefer a residence in this village to any other; every thing interested me in a spot, of which it was probable I should one day be the master.

I could survey my estate with my own eyes, and had opportunities of making such observations as will be of infinite service to me hereafter. I know the poor and

and the rich, the laborious and the idle—the worthy and the unworthy—the little flights, to which my circumstances so frequently exposed me, never gave me pain on my own account. I knew I had the power to silence them, and humble the aggressors to the dust, by simply declaring myself. What a triumph have I over purse-proud ignorance and mean insolence, were I capable of enjoying it?—but I am not; my heart is full of benevolence to all, of love, and Harriet. How do I bless the fortunate scheme that has thus made me acquainted with her modest merit.—My good angel, in pity to my past sufferings, inspired me with it; for she shall overpay them all.

A strange coincidence of circumstances; or rather the hand of Providence, conducted hither Mrs. Larimer and her daughter: it has been happy for them and for us all. She was acquainted with so much

much of my circumstances, as that I was presumptive heir to a considerable estate : but she was ignorant that I was here upon the spot. I enjoined her secrecy as to all she did know, which injunction she has faithfully observed. These ladies were in possession of another secret, which they did not less faithfully keep ; they were the confidants of my love for my Harriet.— As soon as the death of an unhappy woman gave me liberty to think and to speak of it myself, to them I applied, whenever anxious fears, and the encouragement given to Deacon, tormented me. Their intimacy with Mrs. Willars and you, authorised them to put questions that would have been improper from me. You must recollect several circumstances wherein they betrayed an interest, and a curiosity, which must have appeared a little unaccountable to you ! “ O yes,” said Harriet, colouring very high, “ I do recollect very well when we found you with Miss Larimer ;

Larimer; and several times we surprised you together: I own I thought it strange."

"True, my Harriet," returned he, "and did that give you a little jealousy?—Say, yes, and make me the happiest of men.—In those interviews, my love, it was you who were the subject of discourse. Miss Larimer herself had several times felt awkward at them; she had requested to be permitted to explain them, but I always ~~ght~~ objected, and ~~brought~~ her patience, till the death of my brother, which I hourly expected to hear, might leave me at liberty to do away all doubts in the way my fond fancy had painted so delightful. I will not now conceal from you, my Harriet, that in some of those interviews, Miss Larimer's own affairs was the topic. I sometimes spoke to her distantly of my friend Folwing, seeking to revive the remembrance of a man, whom I knew she would soon see, and whom I still hope, may be brought, like his friend, to choose well

well a second time. Thus I had two objects for frequent interviews with her.—I felt for the pain it gave her ; but I was so satisfied that it would end happily for us all, that I hope both she and you will forgive me. Consciousness of the distrust our intimacy seemed to inspire, gave to her natural timidity an air of guilt, which still increased that distrust.

On the evening of my return from my unsuccessful application to your uncle, I met an express to acquaint me with the death of my brother ; I enjoined the messenger silence, and forbade his going on to the mansion-house with the news. It was necessary that I should set off without delay. I might, perhaps, have found means to have apprised my Harriet of my journey, and its cause ; but in the diligence I was obliged to use, it was difficult.

I will

I will own, too, that such an abrupt departure, which I knew would make some noise, and occasion much malicious animadversion, to be immediately succeeded by my triumphant return as Lord of the village, was an enjoyment I knew not how to forego. It is all the revenge I will ever take for impotent attempts to insult my misfortunes.

To my Harriet I wrote as soon as I could choose a plan to send the letter.—Mrs. Willars tells me it was delayed some days. Will my love forgive those uneasy days, when I assure her that, as far as it depends on me, they shall be the last she shall ever know.”

It is unnecessary to describe the remainder of this scene, which ended as scenes of this kind mostly do, after appearing very short to the parties, and very long to those who waited the result. In short, my

my Edward, we are all harmony and concord. The Squire is here, or we are at his house continually. Mr. Peterson has a lease upon his own terms. Mr. Thomas has the little bargain he went in quest of: and general satisfaction, (in the family I mean,) prevails.

Tuesday, July 27.

You will believe, my dearest Edward, that the Larimers partake our happiness; being a little in the secret, their surprize was not so great, but their joy is not less. I hope their generous minds will have reason to rejoice on their own account, and have some cause to believe so.

Mr. Folwing's visit is, I suspect, not merely to his friend; he often calls at Mrs. Larimer's cottage; and methinks
Lucy's

Lucy's countenance clears up apace. She grows plump, and fresh, and animated: it is impossible not to be struck with the change. Harriet tells me, that in a conversation between the two friends, Mr. Folwing had express'd his surprise and disappointment, at having found his wife to be possest but of a very inferior understanding, when her letters had announced her so different.

" I have been sometimes tempted to believe," said he, " that she never wrote them."—" Your suspicions were just," returned Mr. Ewer; " and I can even inform you who did. Those letters, I have heard you praise so highly, were the genuine effusions of a heart that sighed for you in secret. The writer was a friend to both of you—the confidante of your passion for her rival. You have often read to her, passages of her own writing, with enthusiastic praises of the heart that could dic-

tate sentiments, at once so tender and so generous. "She contented herself with deserving the praise, which she might have appropriated: is not such a woman a prize to be wished for?" "Oh, Lucy! was it indeed you," exclaimed Mr. Following; "how blind was I ! I now recollect a thousand circumstances that might have opened my eyes!" He then requested further explanation; and was fully convinced of her merit and partiality.

Gratitude and admiration, added to the tender compassion he has ever felt for Miss Larimer's distress, are likely to produce a return to her generous attachment. He sees, in her altered appearance, the proof of all he has been told; and his heart is too good to be insensible: besides, my dear Edward, he has now been, for some time, her secret benefactor; and we more naturally love those to whom we give, than those to whom we owe. A sense of favours

vours that cannot be repaid, wounds the proud spirit of imperious man, and too often produces ingratitude, because we love not what humbles us in our own estimation ; while benefits conferred exalt us to ourselves, and endear to us those who are the means of procuring us such luxurious sensations. However this may be, I think Mrs. Larimer's sufferings are drawing to an end, by means of this worthy young man, whom, on every account, she will be too happy to call her son.— This good creature often expresses an earnest desire to see you return.—She partakes in all my anxiety. Haste then to your solitary Sophy, and leave our little circle nothing to desire. However, I am not at this time myself a pitiable object—

"I gather bliss to see my fellows blest."

Wednesday 28.

I have not attempted to describe the surprise of the village at the late strange events; for indeed, my Edward, it is indescribable. Miss Grove's curiosity, however, led her here one of the first; she had persuaded herself, and many others, almost as willing to be persuaded as herself, that Mr. Ewer, the real and true proprietor of rich Southlands, never thought of Harriet Peterson but as a play-thing, to cast off at pleasure. It is true she arrived here as he did, and was witness to the respectful assiduity of his address; but in proportion as we believe with facility what we wish, it is hard to convince us of what we do not. She still asserts that the match will never take place, and sneers because it is not hurried. "When is Miss Harriet to be married?" said she to Mrs. Peterson, as soon as she had an opportunity of

of putting the question ; "not yet awhile," returned Mrs. Peterson—"Not yet a while!—you amaze me," said the lady ; "I understood it was to be out of hand." "You understood very wrong then," said Mrs. Peterson coldly. "Nay," said she, "Madam Peterson, nobody can see why it should be deferred—so good a match—suppose our squire was to change his mind; many things fall out betwixt the cup and the lip." "We ben't at all afraid, Ma'am," returned Mrs. Peterson ; "but there's a deal to do at the great house, before it will be fit for my niece, (bridling) and the park, and the gardens, and every thing; then there's to be a new chariot and *pheaton*; I dares say 'twill be a month or two before every thing's in readiness."

These reasons, good as they are, do not prevent Miss Grove from repeating every where, that the match will never take place. She has already heard of Mr. Following's assiduities at Mrs. Larimer's, and

she does not fail to assert, that Mr. Ewer has disposed of his cast-off mistress to a friend. When these two weddings take place, I'm afraid she will burst with spleen. Her elder brother has not been here since the discovery ; when we have met him by chance, he looks very small. However, if the rich inhabitants hang their heads, the poor hold up theirs : They know they have a protector in their landlord.

Friday 30.

Mr. Ewer has made his bride elect a present of a very beautiful gold repeater, with a chain of the same valuable metal. Mrs. Peterson is more delighted with this gift, than even the object to whom it was offered. She is gone out to pay visits, and enjoy the envy of her neighbours. A paper in the cafe contained, in a neat small hand, the following lines:

Observe

Observe each swift succeeding hour,
And all that's mortal own their pow'r;
Yet, shall unfehl, the wasting rage
Of time, of fortune, and of age,
O'er our fixt hearts as harmless move,
And find no subject in our love!
Unalter'd, shall that flame endure,
The glow, still constant, bright and pure!

Sunday, August 1.

I am so selfish, my dear Edward, as sometimes to feel a little melancholy, when I reflect that a very short time will probably deprive me of my young and amiable companion. It is true, I say to myself, it is for her advantage, and she is not removing to an unattainable distance, but yet I shall often find it a very inconvenient one for me. I have accustomed myself to her society, till it is become almost as ne-

cessary to me as my food. I have found it such a solace in thy absence!—Young as she is, she is mistress of a discretion rarely to be met with in persons of years more mature; to her I could communicate without reserve, my thoughts, my hopes, my fears, and opinions. I knew I ran no risk of having them re-echoed painfully to my ears—she was on the same terms with me. She has an innocence of heart, a candour and frankness of temper, to me unequalled—a word of untruth, or even of exaggeration, never escapes her lips—she never reports any thing, however trifling, different from what it is—I could depend on her relations, as of things of which I had been an eye-witness. Tremblingly alive to the sufferings and misfortunes of others, she always bore with patience, generally with fortitude, her own: yet, at times the extreme tenderness of her affections has overpowered her constitution—it was her nerves alone that were at fault—her heart was

was weak, but her mind was strong. Disinterested as much as it is in human nature to be, even in temper, upright in principle, warm and affectionate in disposition!— Oh, my Harriet, I rejoice at your good fortune, but I cannot help repining that it is to part us. Mr. Ewer is indeed worthy of you—he is one of those characters, of which one reads in novels and romances, with more rational pleasure, indeed, than of giants and fairies, but almost with equal incredulity.

Monday 2.

I was pleasing myself yesterday, my Edward, with giving you a slight sketch of the character of that Harriet, of whom I have already written so much, and with whom, I trust, you will one day be acquainted, and enabled to judge for your-

self. A far different train of ideas offer to my mind to-day, and present a shade to the picture.

I know a person who is the reverse of her in every thing, yet who pleases superficial observers, perhaps more generally: what shocks and offends me most in this character, is, that with perpetual claims upon the indulgence of others, it is always immoveably ~~servile~~ to them; though culpably negligent and careless themselves, they never forgive the least omission or oversight in a child or servant. I have heard them relate of themselves as gaieties, instances of the most culpable levity and extravagance; yet they never pardon, but reflect with the utmost acrimony on the slightest symptom of it in others: though it is allowed them to insult the feelings of every one else, to traduce, even to injure them, yet the slightest offence, however undesignated, against the majesty of their persons,

is a crime never to be forgiven. Is this contradictory? no—it is strictly consistent; selfishness and ill-nature considers nothing in the world but that self it idolizes; the rest of mankind are of consequence only as interested or connected with that.

Wednesday, August 4:

I have had a very agreeable conversation with Mr. Ewer, which I hasten to communicate to my Edward. I was sitting alone in the parlour yesterday, when he suddenly made his appearance;—“I will call Miss Harriet,” said I, before I had well answered his enquiries after my health. “There is no occasion, Mrs. Willars,” he replied, taking my hand, and seating me again; “it is with you that I would speak. I have a favour to request of you, and hope that you will not refuse me a few minutes au-

dience to explain it." "Indeed," said I,
"I have so good an opinion of you, that I
could almost venture to give my promise
before your explanation; however, here I
am seated again, and all attention." He
took a chair near me, and after a panegy-
rick of Harriet, equally just and judicious,
he added, that her youth and experience
might still require a guide, and requested,
in the handsomest manner, that I would
accompany his youthful bride, and make
his house my home, at least till your return,
and as much afterwards as we should both
find agreeable. "I have so far flattered
myself," continued he, "that Mrs. Wil-
lars would not refuse a scheme, which she
must be sensible will be so very agreeable to
her friend, that I am fitting up a room pur-
posely for her, and to make the obligation
quite complete, she must condescend to
come and give her orders as to the fur-
nishing of it."

I could not, my Edward, conceal the pleasure this very agreeable proposal afforded me; however, I hesitated as to accepting it—when he saw me waver, he vanished in quest of support, and presently returned with Harriet; she proved an irresistible one, by turns thanking him and intreating me; in short, I yielded, and gave my promise, not at all doubting of my Edward's sanction; and I believe, at that moment, his Majesty's whole dominions could not have produced three happier persons.

Mr. Ewer soon after left us, he being engaged to meet company at home. "How kind, how considerate he is!" said Harriet, while her eyes, as they followed him, ran over with tears of gratitude.

Thursday

Thursday 5.

A conversation, in which I was lately engaged with Harriet, on the subject of an unhappy marriage, has a little damped her spirits. I almost repented of it, when I perceived the effect it had upon her; however, upon reflection, it may not perhaps be fruitless to her to be apprised, that perfect bliss is not more infallibly the result of love, than of other marriages. It is better that her happiness should exceed, than fall short of her expectations.

The circumstance which gave rise to this observation, and of which I was accidentally led to speak, was the unhappy issue of a match engaged in by an intimate friend of my mother's, who was left at eighteen mistress of herself, and a handsome independent fortune: her person was agreeable,

able, her temper and manners mild and engaging; she had an excellent understanding, and was possessed of most polite accomplishments. She boarded with a family who resided chiefly in the country, in a genteel private way.

Here she became acquainted with a younger brother of one of the neighbouring squires, who had little fortune, and no profession at all; he was some years older than herself, and had nothing in his person either strikingly agreeable or otherwise; his understanding was of the everyday kind, and his manners also; but by seeking to make himself agreeable, and having no competitor, he succeeded in becoming so in the eyes of Miss—; she conceived a tender affection for him, and his family being unexceptionable, and very desirous of the match, it was not long in taking place. Part of the lady's fortune,

tune was settled upon her, and in compliance with Mr. Dexter's inclination for a town life, they removed to London.

You would perhaps suppose, my Edward, you, who are of a noble, generous, and consequently grateful nature, that owing every thing to the disinterested affection of his wife, finding in her society all the resources a good understanding well cultivated, engaging manners, and a conciliatory temper, could bestow, he certainly preferred it to all others, made his home his happiness, and became the best and tenderest of husbands ; but it was far otherwise ; he engaged in a course of expensive diversions, preferred every other woman to her who had such claims upon him, and seemed to detest her, because he owed her more than it was possible for him to repay.

My mother used to say, he reminded her of a speech in the Recruiting Officer, where
the

the father of Sylvia, presenting her to Captain Plume, has these applicable expressions:—"Be modishly ungrateful, because she has been unfashionably kind; and treat her worse than you would any body else, because you can never treat her half so well as she deserves."

After much indiscriminate roving, Mr. Dexter at length fixed his affections on a lady, whose chief merit it was to be in every thing the reverse of his amiable wife. Her person was neither handsome nor otherwise, but extremely unlike that of Mrs. Dexter; her temper was uneven and violent; her understanding, though naturally good, wholly uncultivated, and her manners capricious to excess. As she was never half an hour the same, was of unbounded gaiety, and mistress besides of all the arts of coquetry, she obtained in a month an ascendant over the heart of Mr. Dexter, which all the gentleness, tenderness,

ness, and blameless conduct of his wife, during a series of years, had failed to procure her.

Mrs. Dexter was constrained to visit this lady; in order to secure decent treatment for herself, though by no means ignorant of her husband's infatuation, and extremely affected by it; for Mrs. Williams, though suspected for what she was, always kept up an exterior of decorum; and being a fashionable woman, who entertained well, never was wholly given up by her female acquaintance of character; and for her male ones, she was reported to make their visits turn to good account.

This connection, gaming, and expensive company, in a few years materially deranged Mr. Dexter's affairs; his creditors became importunate, and he, very urgent to obtain his wife's settlement; this, however, she steadily refused.

One

One evening that Mrs. D. was spending with my mother, who then lived at Richmond, an express was sent to inform her, that her husband had been arrested, and conveyed to the Fleet. Though since her determined refusal to give up her settlement, they had been on worse terms than ever, and Mr. Dexter had seldom seen or spoken to her, yet she hesitated not an instant to fly to his relief; late and dark as it was, she went alone in a coach, and surprised her husband with a billet in his hand, which he was lamenting over, and which she knew to be the writing of Mrs. Williams—he was stamping and cursing the perfidy and ingratitude of woman, when his wife entered the room—she ran to embrace him, but he started from her as from a serpent. “I have not deserved this, Madam,” said he; “the reproach is too severe; I cannot bear it—my wife follows me to upbraid and torment me,” said he to a person present; “in this way she has always

ways behaved, on purpose to load me with obloquy : ” he then ran on in a strain of invective, as senseless as cruel, against her. Mrs. Dexter did not attempt to expostulate with him—she calmly said, “ if my company is no relief to you, I am ready to go; I came with other hopes and views.” “ Your settlement might relieve me,” said he, “ but your company never.” Her eyes overflowed at this cutting speech.—“ You have made me a wretch,” said she, “ but you shall not make me a beggar.” She left him with these words, the bitterest she had ever uttered. His affairs were patched up by his family, but they never met again.

Mrs. Dexter, under an exterior of calmness, concealed a heart worn by sorrow; she could not think with indifference of her unworthy husband, nor hear of his renewed connection with the woman who had refused him the slightest consolation in his distress, without the bitterest regret. She

She fell into a lingering disorder, and died in my mother's arms, a victim to her hard fate!

As I was observing upon this story, that men are never enslaved by reasonable, amiable women, but when guilty of follies, it is usually for such as I have described, Harriet grew quite impatient with me, nay accused me of prejudice, almost of ingratitude. "Are you not mild and reasonable," said she, "and does not Mr. Willars love you?" "There is no rule without exception, my dear," answered I; "but this is not a case in point; I am not talking of sober, settled, wedded love, which in general I believe, notwithstanding Mrs. Dexter's sad story, may be nourished and kept alive by gentleness, tenderness and good sense; but love, in the general acceptation of the word, is a wild fire, an ungoverned passion, whose fuel can never be so supplied—piquant caprice, sprightly

sprightly defects—the ebbs and flows of an uncertain temper, never twice the same—now extravagantly gay, now pettish and ungovernable—makes the fire that forges its fitters. Such women as I never turn men's heads; nay we too often fail in our attempts at keeping them steady, and preventing others from doing so.

“Poor Mrs. Dexter used to say, when speaking of her husband, that if he had sought Mrs. Williams only as a toy for his leisure hours, she could have forgiven him; ‘it is easy for her,’ said she, ‘to be more alluring than I; but to prefer her as a friend, as an admirer, to give her unbounded sway over his mind, to be lured by her to any folly, while I cannot persuade to things that are just, proper, and necessary; a woman my inferior in every thing but art and caprice—oh! it is too hard!’”

“What

"What would become of me," said Harriet, "if some artful woman should obtain a like ascendant over Mr. Ewer? oh! I hope we shall never go to London!—what will my country ignorance, and simplicity avail me, against the arts and blandishments of the fine town ladies? Alas! if he should come to look upon me as an insipid child, and throw me aside, how should I bear it!"

"I believe," said I, "you may venture to make yourself quite easy on that head: Mr. Ewer is not of an age, and much less of a disposition, to give you the least alarm. On the other hand, do not exalt your imagination with ideas of perfect felicity; some rubs you must be prepared to expect, which, I trust, will only serve to make your usual route seem smoother."

Sunday 8.

Mr. Ewer had sent a haunch of venison in the week, desiring leave to come and partake of it to-day. Mr. Folwing being absent on a visit, in the morning the servant arrived with a basket of fine fruit.

Mrs. Peterson has been in a bustle ever since she knew of his intention; for he that used to be treated with so little ceremony, cannot now be sufficiently regaled. An invitation was sent to the Larimers. The venison was ate and praised, as well as Mrs. Peterson's tarts and custards. — After tea, the heat being sufficiently abated, we all, except Mrs. Larimer, set out on a long walk towards the town.

Within about two miles of it is a low marshy ground, impassable in wet weather,
but

but at this season much frequented by foot people, as it is a nearer way. Here we saw a party of Sunday beaus with their lasses crossing towards us. One of the young women running on before, stuck fast in a bog, and could by no means extricate herself, but sunk deeper and deeper at every step. A young man who was pursuing her, stopt short; all the rest laughed at her, giving her plenty of advice, but not the smallest assistance. At this juncture Mr. Ewer, who had loitered behind to look over some of his grounds, came up with us; he no sooner saw her distress, than, without the smallest remorse for his silk stockings, he hasted to her assistance—he dashed through the mire half leg deep, and bore off the distressed damsel like a true knight. The girl could hardly thank him for tears, for she was so vexed to see her finery, her pink coat, &c. so disgraced with mire, that she fairly burst out

a crying. Mr. Ewer shook his legs a little, and returned to us immediately.

" I shall be afraid to approach your muslin dresses, ladies," said he; " I am like an unlucky dog that has been thrown into muddy water, and, perhaps, may be as unwelcome among petticoats. If it were not for leaving you unguarded, I would instantly return and change my stockings; however, if you suffer me to remain, I promise to keep a proper distance." " I have heard of beauty spots," said I, " but the spots of good-nature are beauty-spots indeed. Pray stay with us and allow us to contemplate them. I assure you they have made your legs quite handsome."

" And what says my Harriet? Can she suffer such a sloven in her company?"— Harriet went and took his arm, with a smile

smile of applause, which required no explanation.

Tuesday 10.

I was yesterday witness to a scene which, I own, I had malice enough to enjoy a little. This was the accidental meeting of our 'Squire with a party of the neighbours, who were drinking tea here.

There were the Groves, Bennetts, Figginses, &c. On his entrance they all arose, looking like so many sheep-stealers: his civility and intreaties could hardly prevail on them to be seated. He addressed them all round with applicable compliments and inquiries; and it was curious to observe the elder Grove, who used to treat him with such insolence, now fawn and cringe, and shew a servility even more

contemptible than his former ill-placed pride.

Mr. Ewer seemed to have forgotten the one, and to overlook the other. He talked of agriculture, asked his tenants opinions, paid them compliments on their intelligence and good management, was very attentive to the ladies; and soon set every body tolerably at ease.

Miss Grove having been silent a long time for her, at length ventured to hope that he had not forgotten the way to her brother's house, but would now and then favour them with a call. "I have not certainly forgotten the way to your house, Miss Grove," said he; "nor yet, that you were so good as to receive me there sometimes, when I had none of my own: I shall certainly call and thank you." All the family reddened, more or less, at this kind

kind speech of their landlord's, which they could not but be sensible how little they deserved. The rest of the company were emboldened, and invitations crowded upon invitations. Mr. Ewer promised to visit them all, upon condition that they would take a dinner with him as soon as the great hall was fit for their reception.

The company parted in appearance well pleased with their landlord's forbearance. Such is the resentment of superior minds!

Wednesday 12.

Mr. Folwing accompanied his friend on his visit here yesterday. The gentlemen brought Mrs. Peterson news of her daughter. They had been to see the mansion-house at Rosefield, which is to let. — I have hopes, said Mr. Ewer, of prevail-

ing on my friend to take it : it is like mine, somewhat out of repair ; but the house is eligible.

Mr. Folwing said there would be no difficulty on his part, if the owners were reasonable ; and a certain fair lady of our acquaintance approving.—“ Can you guess who the lady is, Mrs. Willars ? ” said Mr. Ewer. “ I hope I guess right, ” said I ; “ I guess as I wish.” “ There is no danger of a mistake, Madam, ” said Mr. Folwing ; “ I have obtained Miss Larimer’s promise to be mine, and she has my promise that I will not remove her at a distance from you.”

We heartily wished him joy, as you may believe, my Edward. The business was finally settled but the evening before, or certainly we should have heard of it from Mrs. Larimer. “ Poor thing ! ” said Mrs. Peterson ; “ well, I did not think any body would

would have had her ; but you are old sweet hearts, Sir, as I have heard say." " Will not this be a charming addition to our society, my Harriet?" said Mr. Ewer.— " Oh, we must find a house for Mrs. Willars against her Sailor's return. I hope she will long reside in ours ; but still her home must be in our neighbourhood. I've a little snug box in view ; which, if she approves, it shall be my care to refit.— What say you, Madam? will you renounce the world, and live in seclusion with us?" " You overwhelm me with agreeable tidings and proposals," said I ; " need I say how very delightful such a scheme would be to me? Of Mr. Willars's approbation I cannot doubt : our inclinations have always been in unison."

I then proposed that our evening's walk should be a visit of congratulation to our friends : this was presently agreed upon.— In short, my Edward, all here is, prospects

of felicity, What a change!—Can it be lasting?

Thursday 13.

at 11.30

Mr. Ewer called upon us this morning in his new phaeton, and proposed to take us to Rosefield to see the house Mr. Folwing is about there; likewise the rural cottage he has looked out for us.

I have seen this last, my Edward, with peculiar satisfaction; it has an air of cheerfulness, neatness, and comfort, which are preferable to magnificence with me.—With some little alterations and improvements that Mr. Ewer proposes to make, (for it is his,) it will be every thing that I could wish. It is not more than two miles from his house; and he says it shall be his care that the road shall be always in good

good repair for us. The rent is easy, the situation warm and healthy: there is a large and very improveable garden.

When my Edward is with me, and my Harriet within a walk — what would I wish more!

I have obtained leave of Mr. Ewer to transcribe for you the copy of a letter which he wrote to a friend, some time previous to his arrival here; and during his wanderings, as he stiles them, in the West. It is as follows:

Dear F—— M——

Slow, lonely, and melancholy journies have at length brought me hither; that my mental health is better you may infer from what I inclose; it proves, at least, a mind somewhat at ease, and so far, I am sure, will give you pleasure; for to rhyme,

though ever so ill, requires, I need not tell you, at least collectedness, and a heart not wholly occupied with a subject foreign to that of which it treats.

As I was, a few days since, travelling on the road between Newbury and Reading, I observed an avenue of firs on an eminence at the distance of about a mile; and inquiring at an inn what it might be, as I could distinguish no house near it, was informed, that the spot in question was Ufton Court, and that the house stood too low to be discernible from any distance. Recollecting to have heard that this was once the abode of the celebrated Miss Arabella Fermer, the heroine of the Rape of the Lock, I turned my horse's head that way, and soon arrived there. I tied my nag to a gate, and strolling round the building with that air of interest and curiosity which the idea of what it once was naturally inspired, was accosted, with

great politeness, by an elderly man, who offered to shew me the house, and give me any information in his power. I accepted, with readiness and thanks, and had reason to be well satisfied with my *ciceroni*, whose conversation evinced both information and taste. From him I learnt the particulars I have attempted to put into verse; it was my evening's amusement at a little solitary inn, where I took up my abode for the night. The oak I address is now decaying like the building, and is the more impressive.

My conductor informed me, that when the mansion was in its splendor, an arbour had been constructed in the body of the oak, whither the company sometimes resorted to enjoy the shade: of this there is now no remains; but the bulk might very well admit of such a thing.

Miss A. Fermer married Mr. Perkins of this place. By him she had four sons, who all lived to man's estate; one only was married; and he never had a child; he willed the estate to a Welch family, the present possessors.

The description I have attempted, if not very poetical, is at least exactly true; therefore, before you criticise, call to mind that truth is not the genius of poetry, whose inspiring divinities, Apollo and the Nine, are all fabulous.

ADDRESS

ADDRESS

TO THE

OLD OAK AT UPTON COURT.

Triumphant o'er the tooth of Time,

And o'er the Woodman's blade,

Yon' Oak still rears it's head sublime,

And spreads it's ample shade.

Lord of the desolated scene,

Of fair old age, in vigor green,

Perchance of the first owner sapling plant,

And now the oldest, last inhabitant :—

I hail thee, venerable host !

Thee, noble ruin, still I greet,

For ne'er did holy Druid boast

A sanctu'ry more meet

To celebrate his mystic rite:

Then still to Fancy's ears recite,

What haply thou hast seen; relate

Of yon' decaying pile, the various fate.

Thou say'st the goodly centre rise,

The stories o'er each other bend,

Solid and slow in equal guise

The sister wings ascend.

The avenues of stately pine

Beside thee grew in double line;

And as with deep'ning shade they spread

Up to the hospitable Mansion led.

The growing garden hast thou view'd?

It's sloping terraces incline,

And seek th' adjacent hanging wood,

In regular design:

The stream meandering taught to stay,

Arrested in it's vagrant way,

At once the finny people to restrain,

And clear and fertilize the thirsty plain?

Hast thou not seen the Mansion grac'd

With courtly Dame and Knight,

And hospitality and taste

The vicinage delight?

Hast thou not heard, beneath thy spreading shade,

On days of rest, by rusticks homage paid,

To the lov'd master's honour'd name,

With honest warmth and loud acclaim?

How many a vehicle of State

Around this graft-grown Court,

Has wheel'd along its cumbrous weight!

With him of comely port,

Who seated on his lofty chair,

Guided the well-fed coursers there:

And jolly grooms and liveried jacquies round,

Pip'd as they gallop'd o'er the beaten ground,

Oft' to the jocund tabor's sound,

'Neath yon' deserted Dome,

Did nimble footsteps beat the ground

And pleasure find a home.

The centre held the minstrel band,
 While gentle and while simple hand,
 Light to the measure tript on either side,
 And to the voice of joy the echoing vault replied.

Did not thy branching arms enfold,
 Intwin'd in rustick bow'r,
 Full many a Dame and Baron bold,
 With her renown'd of yore,
 Belinda, all accomplish'd fair?
 Whose beauteous form and ravish'd hair,
 Th' immortal Bard has giv'n to latest time,
 In sweetly-flowing strains and never-dying rhyme.

Four sons the lovely lady bore,
 While, with a mother's joy,
 She felt of hopes a treasur'd store,
 In ev'ry blooming boy!
 Alas! each prop, an ancient name to save,
 Sinks young or childless to an early grave,
 Alike forgotten in the dust,
 They fell! The pride of life, how vain to trust!

A distant line, another name,
 In this our later day,
 Th' untenanted possessions claim,
 And leave them to decay;
 No friendly hand supports the mouldering root,
 And walls, thro' ages, tempest-proof,
 Yield to Neglect's congealing breath,
 And sink in cold forgetfulness to death,

Yet

Yet ere the ruthleſs hammers fall,
That lay thy honours low,
Wand'ring around the tott'ring wall,
My plaintive line shall flow,
And join in sympathetic strains
The murmuring breeze as it complains,
And ſighing tell of Time's remorfeleſs rage,
Along the winding ways thro' chafniſ of age.

And thou, too, fair Majestic Oak,
Thy destiny I read,
Thou too muſt bend thee to the ſtoke,
And 'neath the hatchet bleed;
Thou haſt surviv'd the wreck of all,
The laſt and oldeſt thou muſt fall,
Thy toweriſg head; thy lordly branches bow,
And feel, tho' late, the fate of all below..

Friday 14.

Harriet has received a letter of kind and hearty congratulation from her Shropshire uncle; he hopes, if it be not too bold a request, to be allowed to do the office of father at her nuptials, and to be permitted

to bring his daughter with him; though, as he says, disqualified for a bride's-maid. Harriet returned an affectionate answer by the first post; wherein she accepted his offer, with the unanimous consent of all concerned.

Our conversation, a few days ago, turned upon education: Mr. Ewer said, he had been reading Rousseau, Madam de Genlis, and several other authors on that subject. "I wish," said he, "to form a system of my own; for I still flatter myself with the hopes of having occasion for one; will Mrs. Willars favour me with her ideas?" I advised him to address himself to some person who had at least some experience to guide them; "for my own part," I said, "my notions are a little singular. Systems of all kinds I hold to be useless, particularly those of the authors you have been consulting; to sum up a good many objections in one, I believe them to be impracticable.

practicable. It is certainly much easier to censure them, than to contrive better; however, since you do me the honour of asking my opinion, I will tell you of a method, which I have seen practised with success, but which it requires, perhaps, some resolution to adopt. As the leading principle is, that parents should correct themselves, instead of their children—in the government of the latter, I would recommend an even course between great indulgence and too much severity; yet of the two extremes, if you cannot steer clear of both, I would prefer the former, because I have even seen it answer best; and in the common course of things I am convinced it always will.

“ I allow that there are untoward natures whom indulgence cannot soften any more than severity subdue; but they are rare, and it is not for such that rules are given. Children that are indulged will in general
be

be fond of their parents, but great severity will attach to you nothing but a spaniel ; and when once you have lost in the love of your offspring, your strongest hold of them, with what will you supply its place ? With fear, with constraint ? If your children are too much in awe of you, you will never know their dispositions, nor be able to judge of their propensities : how then direct them aright ? they may be very orderly when immediately under your eye ; but you make them slaves and hypocrites."

"Really, Madam," said Mr. Ewer, "you surprise me ; I never should have suspected you of being an advocate for spoiling children." "Nor am I," returned I ; "I only say, that of the two evils it is the least ; but I own I am for very much indulging them, for making them as happy as possible, for never thwarting them unnecessarily ; that whenever it is necessary, my authority may have its full force, from the conviction that it is never wantonly or capriciously

capriciously asserted. I am for contriving that they should never be so well satisfied, so much at ease, so happy, or so entertained, as at home and with me ; this point gained, and it is a very essential one, my next endeavour should be, never to let them see in me any thing but what they might safely imitate. Children naturally look up to their parents for a model—my papa says so, my mamma does so and so, is authority without appeal with them. If then they are trained to look up to papa and mamma with equal delight and veneration, and these are correct copies for their imitation, I believe both their morals and happiness will be tolerably secure. But observe, the indulgence I mean to recommend must have no tincture of weakness ; it should be firm and reasonable : from your word, once given, let there be no appeal ; it must not be in the power of a little wheedler to tease or coax you from your purpose—you must know how to be steady,

steady, as well as kind--never break your promise with a child--never deceive them, not even in trifles or in jest, or you run the risk of giving them two bad lessons at once--you teach them to mistrust others, and to be false themselves. I have seen these few simple rules, well observed; produce the happiest effect. Children indulged, without being humorous, and perfectly tractable and obedient, though hardly ever contradicted; because they had the happiness of steady, even-tempered, just and reasonable parents."

Mr. Ewer thanked me, and said, "he thought my plan worth trying."

Saturday 15.

Our family all dined yesterday at the Mansion House. Mrs. and Miss Larimer were likewise there; the latter, stript of her melancholy,

melancholy, seems quite a new creature, like the serpent who has stript its skin. I beg her pardon for the comparison, for she has certainly much more of the dove. Mrs. Peterson appeared extremely to enjoy the aspect of wealth and elegance, of which her niece is so shortly to be mistress. She was invited to give advice and directions, which flattered her highly ; she ordered every thing she thought deficient in the kitchen, the dairy, and the poultry yard ;—with respect to the stile in which her niece is to live, she certainly enjoys it the most of the two.

Sunday 16.

Mr. Ewer was lately reading to us some letters from his friend, the French Abbé I have formerly mentioned to you. They contain accounts of the hardships, difficulties,

culties, and mortifications he has sustained since his exile ; so much the more impressive, as he treats them with philosophic cheerfulness and disregard. Sometimes, after a hard day's journey on foot, he has been refused shelter at the towns where he arrived, fatigued and benighted, and obliged to pursue his route to another, with every prospect of encountering the same inhospitable rebuff.

The name of an emigrant, that is, of a stranger flying from his country, for his allegiance to his King, and his fidelity to his principle, which ought at least to have insured him hospitality among the German and Italian petty princes, usually barred their gates against him.

An anecdote which he relates of a person of whom he had some knowledge, is so striking, that I cannot forbear mentioning it. I am very sorry the name of the hero has

has escaped me. He was, however, an officer of good family and some distinction; who never quitted Paris, till after the King's imprisonment had rendered his services useless, and who had received several wounds in his cause. He was travelling on foot, as it suited his circumstances; and arrived late in the evening at the city of Modena; he was refused admittance at the gate, and informed that it was by the Duke's positive commands: "it is impossible," said the emigrant, "that the Duke could give so inhuman an order." "His coach is driving up," returned the officer; "you may hear it from himself." The emigrant advanced towards the carriage and stopt it. "Who are you?" said the Duke. "Who am I?" returned the emigrant, tearing open his bosom; "I am one of those fools who have abandoned my home, my fortune, my friends; who am covered with wounds, and am an exile and a wanderer for such as you, and to be denied

nied admittance at your gates ; but I'll return to my country, and if I appear at the head of an armed force, see if you will refuse me then."

The hardships of these cases, and the fond hopes, which, in spite of continual disappointment, the writer still seems to cherish, of a counter-revolution, reinstatement in his fortune, restoration to his friends, &c. dwelt on my mind, and produced the following attempt at a description in verse, which, sure of my Edward's indulgence, I shall submit to his mild eye to-morrow *.

VOL. III.

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Monday

* When Bonaparte overran Italy, the Duke of Modena sent a deputation to him, representing his having refused shelter to the French Emigrants, as a plea for indulgence on the part of the conqueror : yet it availed him nothing ; he was even reproached for his inhospitality, and was soon after reduced to the necessity of emigrating himself.

Monday 17.

THE EMIGRANT.

See the poor Exile from his native skies;
—Refuge withheld him wheresoe'er he hies,
Denied the wretched shelter to retain,
Which wearied fainting steps could hardly gain;—
Roaming, unguided, his bewilder'd way,
Thro' darknes, tempests, danger, and dismay!
Oft woe-worn, sad, nor finding as he goes,
Rest for his head, nor pity for his woes.
With added anguish he recalls to mind,
The home and tender ties he leaves behind;
Perchance a sister, sick'ning in her bloom,
Insult, and scorn, and poverty her doom;
A drooping mother's unprotected years,
To sink with sorrow, misery and fears;
Or fond ideas, a yet tend'rer kind,
Cling closer on his agonising mind:
Still on his cheek he feels the parting tear,
The last farewell still vibrates on his ear;
Oft as sad retrospecks his spirits goad,
He's urg'd to measure back his weary road,
A last embrace, of all he loves, to seal,
And bend his bosom to the reeking steel.
If haply, tedious toils and perils past,
He gain some island's shelter'd coast at last,
Where Britons and benevolence reside,
And safe from persecution he may hide;

As Iris forms her richly varied bow
Of falling rains, and Sol's enliv'ning glow ;
Thus Hope, bright-shining on his humid eyes,
Bids vivid colours, painted visions rise,
And like that orb, which raptur'd we behold,
Makes ev'ry distant prospect gay with gold :
Tho' often baffled his deluded view,
The meteor still his roving thoughts pursue ;
And ev'ry wind that dashes on the shore,
His shipwreck'd cause exalts his hope the more.
Tyrannic scenes, oft varied, still outdone,
Of many tyrants they exchange to one,
Or one to many—with the ceaseless flow
Of deluges of blood, of crimes, of woe,
Still bid him hope: the harm will bring its cure—
That ills so various cannot long endure :
Thro' the black mist's impenetrable gloom,
He sees gigantick shapes of joys to come ;
His ancient monarchy, so long deplored,
With order, peace, security, restor'd ;
His native castle from its ashes rise,
His vassals hail him with o'erflowing eyes :
He views the Temple still adorn'd and free,
And prostrate myriads bend the willing knee,
His kindred with their wealth and antient state,
And ponders what shall be his own best fate ;
Place and preferment wait upon his will :
Thus Hope's fair phantom soothes his sorrows still.

Tuesday 18.

Mr. Folwing and I had lately a smart dispute. Mrs. Larimer was inquiring after a gentleman who had been a great companion of her husband's, and who, it was observed, had the same turn for every thing but expence; for his parsimony was so great, that some traits were cited of it, that favoured even of meanness.

"Mr. S. is turned methodist, and become a great saint, Madam," said Mr. Folwing; "for the convenience of tabernacle-hunting he is settled at Bath. This ought not to surprise you; such wonderful conversions, you know, are common; many of your greatest saints have been even greater sinners;—have they not, Mrs. Willars?" addressing me. I denied the fact, and defied him to name a single instance of it. This bold assertion brought all the company

company against me—even Mr. Ewer.—“ Why, Mrs. Willars, what will you do with St. Paul, St. Austin, and so many others, with whom you are doubtless acquainted?” “ These were great saints, I allow,” returned I, “ and certainly had been great sinners; but not of the description you mention; they were men of strong passions, but noble natures, who, with great vices, had likewise great virtues, and could neither be good nor bad by halves.”

“ Men like Mr. S. may possibly get to heaven in some sneaking way or other, but would bargain for a seat, even there, and never purchase it at a generous price.”

“ No, Mr. Folwing, those who cannot part freely with relief to a fellow creature, never give their whole hearts to God.—Believe me, no such sneaking sinner ever

became a faint at all, much less a great one."

Mr. S. Grove's visits are of late become very frequent; and his assiduities to Miss Peterson very striking. The ambition of being allied, through her, to the Lord of the Manor, has, I believe, settled his wavering affections.—He is well received by all.

Wednesday 19.

The wheat harvest goes on apace, and promises to yield abundantly. Mr. Peterson, and all our farmers, are in good spirits; and their housewives as busy as bees. To this object of general concern I am far from being indifferent; when I see the reapers gathering up their sheaves,

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the riches of the year, and the gleaners, or, as they are here called, the leafers, picking up the relicks of the abundance, my heart swells with gratitude to the Creator and merciful Bestower of all good gifts ; and I experience a sensation I would not exchange for all that wealth or grandeur has to bestow.

Yesterday, as my companion and I were following the slow motion of a waggon of this real treasure, as it drew off our attention was engaged by a group of miserable looking persons sitting under a hedge, which it had concealed from us. Some of the reapers were disputing with them ; and as we drew near, we heard the cause of this disagreement : — “ Why, arrah, honey ! ” said a man in a strong Irish brogue, “ here I am come now all the way from little Ireland, I and my wife and my children, and all my family, besides what I left behind, on purpose to pick up a little work to pay

my rent, honey ; and 'tis very hard you will not let me earn so much as half a thirteener." The reapers, men and women, abused the poor Irishman without mercy ; bid him go back to his bogs and potatoe-land, and not come here to rob them of their bread ; all swearing that if the *Irish bog-trotters* got employ in the parish, they, none of them would strike another stroke. As we drew nearer, the dispute subsided, and the reapers leaving these poor people, went to their busines.

I always feel, my dear Edward, a particular compassion for poor foreigners in general ; for poor Irish and Negroes in particular ; it is a sentiment spontaneous to my heart, which reason and experience have strengthened and reduced to principle : so many look with an envious or an evil eye on any little service afforded them ;—so many forget, that although born under other skies, they are not the less our brethren ;

thren; that the more they are strangers, the more they are distressed, and their claims on the humanity of their fellow creatures, consequently, so much the stronger;—that we are commanded to consider as neighbours, all who stand in need of our help, with a promise of reward for so doing, and a threat of punishment if we disobey.—“I was a stranger, and ye took me in.”—For these reasons, as well as sentiment, as far as my limited means allow, I have a particular pleasure in endeavouring to supply this general deficiency of pity, and of bestowing my mite as I can, on “strangers in a foreign land!”

In short, my dear Edward, we both lent an ear of tender interest to the tale of distress of this poor family, consisting of seven persons, all able to handle a reap-hook, more or less, and extremely willing to do so, since, as they said, they came all the way from little Ireland on purpose. We gave

gave them a trifle for present relief, and felt inexpressible satisfaction that we could take the liberty of sending such a party to the mansion-house, with a certainty of their being welcome guests. We hastened homeward to apprise the squire, whom we expected, and who did not fail to meet us a little way from the house.

"We have taken the liberty to send you some company, 'Sir,'" said I, "and it is so numerous, that I doubt you must go back to order accommodations." When I had explained myself, he complied, as I expected, with all the benevolence so natural to him. He only requested as a condition, that we should return, and consult with him on the means most expedient for their relief. "I think, my dear," I said to Harriet, "that after sending Mr. Ewer such a party, we can do no less than go with him to help in entertaining them." She smiled assent, and taking each an arm, we led him off in triumph.

triumph. We arrived before the poor people; Mr. Ewer had time to provide for their accommodation,—he ordered clean straw into a barn, with a plentiful regale of bread and cheeſe and beer—he has engaged to lodge them during their residence in the parish; to prevail upon his tenants to give them employ, as he knows there is a want of hands—should the other labourers complain, they will not be regarded; for however attentive Mr. Ewer is to soften the cries of distress, he knows how to distinguish them from the clamors of envy and discontent.

On rummaging my papers, I lately found the following Lines, from an Aunt to her Niece, when a child. I send them for your amusement.

Sport yet awhile as innocent and free;
All nature smiling offers charms to thee;
While life's frail flow'rs thro' spring that hardly last,
(Frail blossoms often stript by April's blast)

Bloom

Bloom in thy way, uninjur'd by thy tread,
Light as the zephyr o'er the lilly's head.

Yet sport awhile, ere care's corroding plough
Dig its deep way along thy placid' brow;
Ere discontent has taught her sullen gloom,
Or pining sickness spoil'd thee of thy bloom;
Yet frolic like the playful lamb, ere pain
Thy pliant limbs shall stiffen and restrain.

For thee of human life the briny wave
Shews like sweet waters, where the Naiads lave,
Its shoals conceal'd, beneath the wavy green,
Its unsuspected quick-sands all unseen:
The toils and perils of this fair-fac'd sea,
To pale experience awful, scare not thee.
That hidden in the caverns of the deep,
Tremendous tempests threaten while they sleep,
That yon small cloud that spots the æther blue,
Foul storms announces—ne'er occurs to you:
Nor treach'rous syren, nor devouring shark,
Alarm from failing thy light, sportive bark.
Then to the breeze its silver sails expand,
While heedful eyes pursue it from the land;
While filken cables check its vent'rous way,
Yet sport, and harmleſs like the dolphin play.
Ah ! now, whilst entering on this world of woe,
Which happily as yet thou canſt not know,
While the gay pageant of this motley view,
To thee as real seems, as it is new ;
Ere yet behind the ſcenes thy roving eye
The hideous figures as they strip ſhall ſpy;
Or mark by calm Reflec'tion's sober light,
The painted canvas which deceiv'd thy ſight ;

And

And the coarse daubing blushingly detect,
Which shew'd so gorgeously in stage effect —
Ah! sport awhile, the fairy scene enjoy,
Find mirth in gloom, in all you touch a toy ;
Lift not the curtain that beguiles so sweet,
Be gay and reckless, dream not of deceit ;
Too soon shall life hang heavy on thy brow :
Ah ! then, the present seize, be happy now.

Thursday 20.

Mr. Ewer was with us by our breakfast hour this morning, which is tolerably early ; his visit was not to Harriet but to me. He drew a newspaper from his pocket. “Mrs. Willars,” said he, “I have heard you say, that the Gazette was the only part of the paper you cared to read ; I have brought you one, yet I hardly dare trust you to read it.” “Why so ?” said I, “does it contain bad news ?” “No, Madam,

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the news is very good, and particularly so for you ; it relates a gallant action of one of our vessels, and speaks with particular praise of an officer, in whom you have, I believe, some little interest ; shall I read it to you ?" I bowed assent. You know what followed, my Edward. I heard your Admiral's praises of you with tears of joy ! but he says it is you that brings the dispatches—they are published, and I hear nothing from you—Alas ! what can this mean ?

Saturday 22.

Indeed, my love, I am very miserable ! I think I enjoy your fame as I ought, yet I repeat it, I am very miserable !—It is Lieutenant Willars that brings the dispatches—they are published—some little time has then elapsed since his arrival: I read it in the public prints ; and not one word for me !

Sunday

Sunday 23.

Mr. Ewer has employed a friend to enquire after you at the Admiralty—it is very kind of him; yet if I hear not to-day, I shall think some accident has befallen you, and that it is concealed from me.—I shall send for a post-chaise, and seek intelligence myself.

N. B. Mr. Willars arrived at Southlands this evening—he had written to his wife immediately on his arrival in England; but the letter by some accident never reached her. The reader may judge for himself of the joy of this meeting, which of course put an end to her journal.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

VOL. I.

P.	for	read	P.	for	read
12	returned,	repaired.	162	at this,	all this.
13	tides,	tides.	182	sans-froid,	fens froid.
31	refeate dye	a rofete	ib.	fancy,	panfy.
99	a lark,	the larks.	183	drilling,	killing.
109	returning,	retiring.	ib.	beloved,	bestowed.
127	damned,	hemmed.	250	Before introduced, insert she.	Du Cygne,
144	my packet,	every packet.	260	Du Lygne,	Du Cygry,
155	restler,	rultic.	162	no reach,	no luck.

VOL. II.

P.	for	read	P.	for	read
10	Armoishole,	Armoisfiede.	132	which one,	while one.
11	raked,	waked.	160	gale,	blait.
15	faid sic,	faid I.	201, 202, &c seq.	Should be 193, 194, &c.	desire.
27	A'teads,	A'lenden.	240	deterve,	of heart.
44	have not found,	have found.	255	of man's heart,	favourite's.
70	fairy,	Fairy.	288	faveurite,	Souvenirs.
76	the Mrs. Bennet,	Mrs. Fennet.	356	det arch,	
77	pour,	power.			

VOL. III.

P.	for	read	P.	for	read
2	Mrs. Peterson,	Mr. Peterson.	75	piece,	specimen.
9	bred, (line 2,)	tried.	193	So behold,	To beheld.
10	filter,	vifilar.	155	despiled,	despaired.
11	interior,	criterion.	213	her,	him.
21	contyning,	curtyng.	237	brought,	brought.
24	was seen,	was teare.	211	returned,	turned over.
ib.	where in,	were in.	250	fecture,	severe.
43	relation to,	relative to.	274	Upton Court,	Uiton Court,
61	it is strange,	is it strange.			

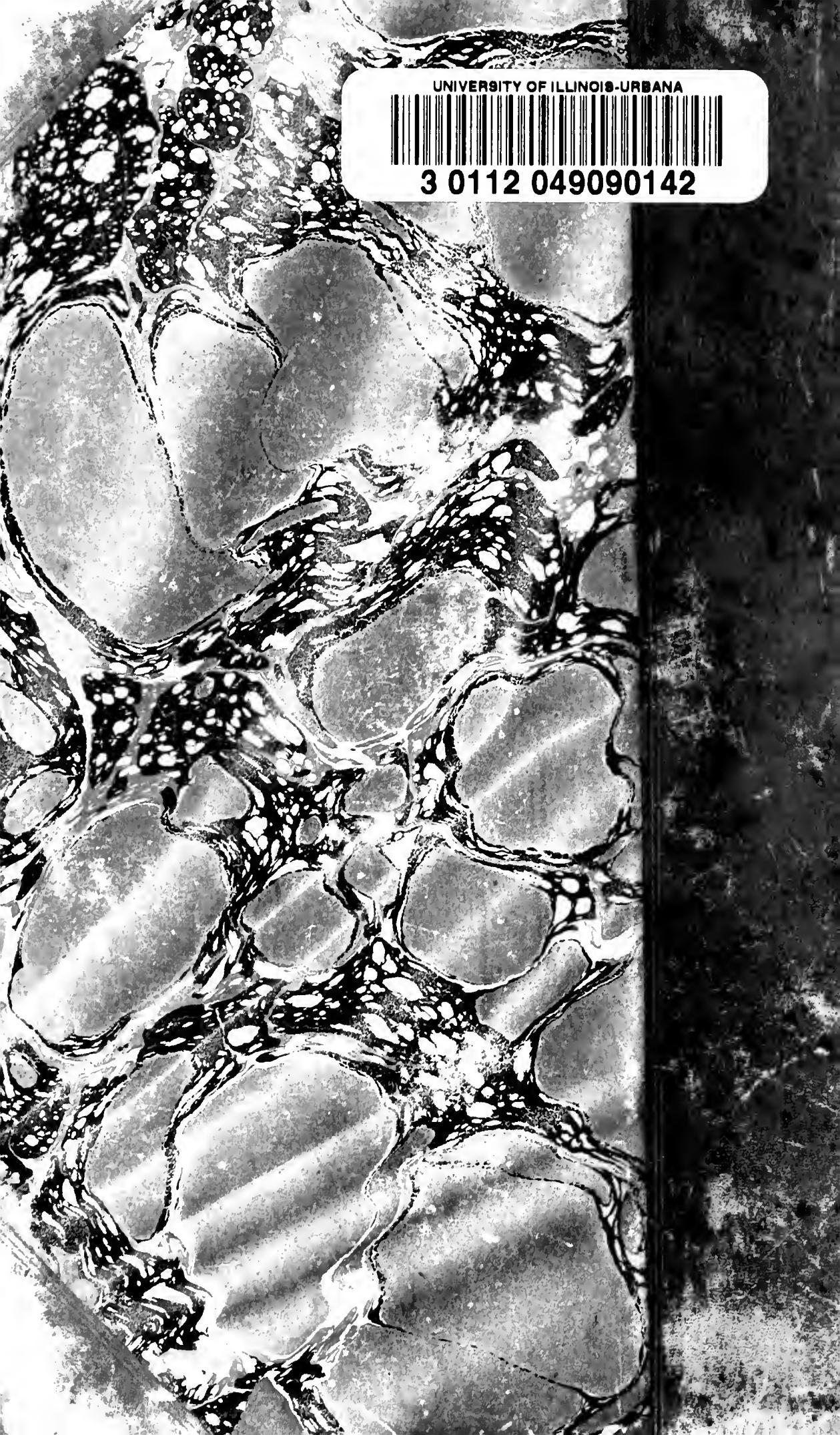
(The Binder is desired to cancel the following leaves:

In Vol. I. Pages 15 and 16,—185 and 186.

In Vol. II. Pages 23 and 24,—141 to 144,—149 to 152,—293 to 296.

In Vol. III. Pages 71 and 72,—79 and 80,—103 and 104.





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